AUTHORS DIGEST

THE WORLD'S GREAT STORIES IN BRIEF, PREPARED
BY A STAFF OF LITERARY EXPERTS, WITH
THE ASSISTANCE OF MANY
LIVING NOVELISTS

ROSSITER JOHNSON, PH.D., LL.D.
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ISSUED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
AUTHORS PRESS

This is Volume II of a complete set of the

AUTHORS DIGEST

Consisting of Twenty Volumes, Issued Strictly as a Limited Edition. In Volume I will be found the Official Certificate, under the Seal of the Authors Press, as to the Limitation of the Edition, the Registered Number of this Set, and the Name of the Owner.

COPYRIGHT 1908 BY AUTHOR'S PRESS

Gail 1910

AUTHORS DIGEST

VOLUME II

JANE GOODWIN AUSTIN

TO

APHRA BEHN

Babbie promises to save old Nanny from the poorhouse
(*The Little Minister*, p. 329)

Hand-painted photogravure on French Plate Paper, after an original painting made for this edition by Frank X. Leyendecker

Issued under the auspices of the
AUTHORS PRESS

Jérôme promises to save old Nanny from the poorhouse.
(The Little Minister, p. 270)

Hand-painted photogravure on French Plate Paper, after an original painting
made for this edition by Frank X. Leyendecker

AUTHORS DIGEST

VOLUME II

JANE GOODWIN AUSTIN

TO

APHRA BEHN

Issued under the auspices of the
AUTHORS PRESS

COPYRIGHT, 1908,
BY THE AUTHORS PRESS

CONTENTS

JANE GOODWIN AUSTIN

PAGE

A Nameless Nobleman 1

MASSIMO D'AZELIO

Ettore Fieramosca 12

IRVING BACHELLER

Eben Holden 24

WOLCOTT BALESTIER

Benefits Forgot 35

HONORÉ DE BALZAC

The Chouans 47
The Magic Skin 58
A Woman of Thirty 66
Louis Lambert 77
The Country Doctor 88
Eugénie Grandet 95
Père Goriot 106
Seraphita 117
The Lily of the Valley 129
Lost Illusions 140
César Birotteau 151
Beatrix 162
A Distinguished Provincial at Paris 173

HONORÉ DE BALZAC (*Continued*)

PAGE

Ursule Mirouët 184
Catherine de' Medici 193
A Bachelor's Establishment 212
A Start in Life 223
Modeste Mignon 233
Cousin Bette 244
Cousin Pons 255
The Member for Arcis 266
The Middle Classes 277

JOHN BANIM

Boyne Water 287

AMELIA EDITH BARR

A Bow of Orange Ribbon 308

JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

A Window in Thrums 320
The Little Minister 326

ANTON GIULIO BARRILI

The Eleventh Commandment 334

ARLO BATES

A Wheel of Fire 348

RENÉ BAZIN

The Ink-Stain 358

FRANCES COURTENAY BAYLOR

On Both Sides 370

WILLIAM BECKFORD

PAGE

Vathek: an Arabian Tale 382

CUTHBERT BEDE

The Adventures of Mr. Verdant Green 394

HENRY WARD BEECHER

Norwood 406

APHRA BEHN

Oroonoko: or, The Royal Slave 418

ILLUSTRATIONS

The Egyptian promises to save old Nanny from the poorhouse. (*The Little Minister*, p. 329) . *Frontispiece*

From a painting by Frank X. Leyendecker.

PAGE

Portrait of Honoré de Balzac 47

From a celebrated painting by L. Boulanger.

"Ah, my angels!" were the last words the old man murmured. (*Père Goriot*) 116

From an etching by E. Abot, after the drawing by Albert Lynch.

JANE GOODWIN AUSTIN

(United States, 1831–1894)

A NAMELESS NOBLEMAN (1881)

This story of the days of the "grand monarch" has long been a favorite and was successfully dramatized.

T a brilliant function in the grand gallery of the palace at Versailles in the second half of his reign, Louis XIV saw his mistress, Madame de Montespan, flirting audaciously with the Vicomte de Montarnaud, a young gallant from Provence. Addressing the young gallant's father, a courtier of seventy, the King said: "Monsieur de Montarnaud, you asked permission, some time ago, to marry your eldest son to Mademoiselle de Rochenbois, your ward. I withdraw my opposition, and permit the marriage. It may take place in the royal chapel, and we shall see whether some place about the court can be found for the bride, who will remain here while the Vicomte returns to duty."

Further talk elicited from the Comte the fact that his younger son, François, was at the Château de Montarnaud in Provence, with the Comte's ward, Valerie de Rochenbois, whereupon Louis observed:

"Really, Monsieur de Montarnaud, you are a man of resource. Since it was not permitted to marry your eldest son to your wealthy ward, you shut her up in a country house with the younger one, trusting to the chapter of accidents for a marriage, public or private, before there should be time to prevent it. I shall, however, expect to receive Madame la Vicomtesse de Montarnaud, née Rochenbois, within the month."

Approaching Madame de Montespan, the King then remarked that, judging by the expression on the Vicomte's face, she was probably congratulating him upon his approach-

ing marriage. Enjoying the confusion of the two, the King again announced his intentions as to the marriage and ordered the young man to go to Montarnaud for his father's ward the next day. Not long after this event, the Comte with his eldest son, Gaston, arrived at the Château de Montarnaud a few moments only after François, a lad of twenty, had confessed to his father's ward his love for her. While Gaston was acquainting his brother with the condition of affairs, the Comte informed Valerie of the King's commands as to herself and Gaston. The brothers had not been on friendly terms since their childhood, and the news now brought by the elder did not tend to greater amity. An open quarrel was presently averted by the tactful interference of their father, who led away his elder son, while François vainly sought an interview with Valerie, to whom he at length succeeded in despatching a note by the hands of her old nurse, Marie. The note entreated her to let him know at midnight, when he would be stationed under her window, whether she would marry him. Valerie was by no means sure of her own mind. She was indifferent to Gaston, but, being of a frivolous, butterfly temperament, she greatly inclined toward the gay life that marriage with him would open to her.

While François waited in the darkness for Valerie's response, Gaston set off through the garden in search of adventures in the *auberge* of the village of Montarnaud, followed at a little distance by Valerie's governess, Mademoiselle Salerne, who had previously imagined him in love with her and now, filled with jealousy and suspicion, was resolved to spy upon him. The young Abbé Despard, the tutor of François, while walking in the garden meanwhile, encountered her returning from her quest of Gaston, and reproached her for imprudence. Resolved to spy upon him also, the governess did not return to the house, as his quick ear assured him, and he came to the conclusion that she was either acting as a spy or was set to watch perhaps lest a private meeting of François and Valerie should be interrupted. At midnight François, mounted on a fruit-ladder, stood at Valerie's window to receive her answer, only to learn that she was not sufficiently fond of him to give up the splendors of court life for his sake. François was beginning to storm

when interrupted by his brother's voice from below crying out "Robbers!" A kick from Gaston then brought François and the ladder to the ground, and a conflict ensued in which the more powerful François was victor, and, fearing lest he had given the other a mortal blow, he fled. He had hardly done this, however, when his sense of honor urged him to return and face the consequences, and at this moment he encountered his friend, the Abbé, who counseled him to wait for a few moments till he, the Abbé, could ascertain what had taken place.

The Abbé presently returned with the news that Gaston was not dead, was perhaps not mortally injured, but that his father was in a white rage on account of the probable displeasure of the King, and that the governess had accused François of "the murder," as she termed it. The Abbé then advised his pupil to remain in hiding for a short time, and produced a note to François from Valerie urging the same course. The young Baron reluctantly yielded to persuasion and for several days remained concealed in the home of the Abbé's father, a grocer in Marseilles. At last a letter from Valerie reached him by the hands of Abbé Despard, in which the writer admitted that, although she did not love Gaston, she did greatly desire to live at the court, and that she must go.

On reading these words François resolved to sell his estates in Normandy and leave France, saying: "I have no longer a country, a home, or a name. The King of France has stolen my father's honor and my *fiancée's* faith. I renounce all that makes me a Frenchman, and I leave the country of Louis the Fourteenth, never to set foot upon its soil again."

Upon this the Abbé suggested that he resume the surgical studies that had once interested him, adding that army hospitals were rapid schools; that if François desired it he would expatriate himself also; and that in the same hospitals he could give his services as chaplain. François readily adopted the suggestion as to the study of surgery.

About six years after these events the young Baron and his friend were on board a French privateer, the former ranking as ship's surgeon and the other as chaplain; and while cruising in Buzzard's Bay, in the Pilgrim Colony, they were wrecked near the Falmouth shore. As France and England were then

at war, the officers and crew of the wrecked vessel were accounted enemies and marched to Boston, the Abbé among them. But François, having swum ashore, escaped capture.

Two days later, Humphrey Wilder, a farmer near Falmouth, left home with his wife, a Quaker preacher, to attend Quarterly Meeting at New Bedford, leaving their grown daughter Molly alone in charge of the house. Wilder was a member of the Church of England, and, though yielding to his wife's imperious will in many things, utterly refused to forsake his church for Quakerism, and insisted that their only child should be reared in the Anglican faith. On leaving England he prudently settled himself as far from any Friends' meeting-place as might be, so that Deborah, to her great vexation, could attend only such infrequent gatherings as the Quarterly Meetings. Their only neighbors were a family named Hetherford, and Deborah wished Molly to marry Reuben Hetherford, a mean, small-natured rustic. Humphrey did not favor the proposal; but Reuben was the only young man in the neighborhood, and an unmarried woman was of small importance in the Pilgrim Colony. He had, however, distinctly said that Reuben was not to enter the house in his absence, unless accompanied by Mercy Hetherford, the young man's sister.

As Molly sat at her spinning-wheel after her parents had driven away, she saw Reuben's face against the window, and, after slipping into place the bolt across the door, held a brief parley with him at the window, which she opened slightly. Reuben explained that he stopped to say that Mercy would come to stay with her presently, and suggested that he should come in for a little. To this Molly replied as her father had bidden her, and remarking that it was too cold for standing at open windows returned to her spinning, while her disappointed lover went home in sullen rage. In the afternoon Mercy Hetherford arrived to keep her company, and as a storm had now arisen Reuben came at nightfall to take them both to the Hetherford farmhouse after supper. As Reuben sat at the table with the two girls, Molly's repulsion to him increased when she observed his uncouth manners and listened to his harsh voice, and she felt that she could never endure to be his wife. He had much to say of the wreck of a French privateer two nights

previously, and added that, while the officers and crew had been nearly all taken prisoners, it was supposed that a few had escaped and were in hiding. Twenty dollars a head had been offered for all Frenchmen who should be found, he said, and he wished he might have the luck to capture one of the fugitives.

He now announced that it was time for them all to set out for the Hetherford house, where his mother was expecting Molly; but the latter, to his great indignation, declared that she should stay where she was, and when he attempted to command she informed him that she did not recognize his right to command her, and that whatever engagement had hitherto existed between them she now broke off altogether. From this position she would not retreat, and the Hetherfords departed in wrath.

Left alone with only her cat for company, Molly assured herself that there was nothing to fear, but presently a tapping at the window caught her attention and she saw a man's face against the pane. She seized her father's clumsy pistol and pointed it toward the window, but the man did not stir. He only uttered the one word, "Bread." That he was starving his white face now assured her, and she hastened to let him in. As she did so a fierce blast of wind hurled him over the threshold in a senseless heap upon the floor. As he lay there Molly perceived not only that the helpless stranger was young and handsome, but that his arm, which was doubled under him, was broken. Her efforts to straighten it aroused him, and he murmured something in French, becoming again unconscious immediately.

The thought that this might be the chief of a band of French marauders crossed Molly's mind, but she said to herself that she must not let the man die even though he might be her enemy; and with the assistance of such domestic remedies as she had at hand consciousness returned once more and she thereupon gave him food.

With returning strength the stranger related how his arm had been broken against the rocks, and with some difficulty Molly comprehended his broken English. Following his directions, she arranged matters so that with his unhurt right

hand he drew the bone into place, and she then applied splints and bandages. After this had been done she half-drew, half-led him to the bed in the next room and there left him, after ministering to his comfort so far as she was able. As she bent over him the next morning he was sleeping uneasily and murmuring the name of Valerie—a possible sweetheart, Molly thought with a twinge of pain.

A loud knock on the outer door aroused the sleeper, and after bidding him make no noise she returned to the kitchen and removed every trace of the stranger's presence before she opened the house door to admit Amariah Coffin, the Wilders' hired man, who had returned from driving her parents to New Bedford. He was a privileged member of the household, and to him she explained in regard to Reuben and Mercy, and also that while he boarded with the Hetherfords he was not to ask any of them to come and stay with her, as she was not afraid to be alone for the six days of her parents' absence, since he was to come every day to attend to the live stock. After Amariah had gone to the barn, Molly found her patient in feverish alarm:

"Is it the English to prisoner me?" he demanded.

"No," she replied soothingly, "you are quite safe here, and I will care for you." She then told him her name in response to his question, learned that his name was François, and presently busied herself in arranging for his comfort and security, wondering the while at the strange new joy and light that had come into her life.

Later in the day, when Amariah entered the kitchen to warm his hands, he told of footprints he had seen in the snow around the house, and of a strange knife he had found in the barn and had let Reuben Hetherford take, and how Reuben said he would track the owner twenty miles but he would find him.

The same day Mrs. Hetherford visited Molly in order to plead her son's cause, but to no effect, and the days of the Wilders' absence were unbroken by another visitor till the morning of the last.

On the previous day Amariah set out to bring the Wilders home, and Molly then arranged a sleeping-place for her patient

in the attic, as he was unwilling to have his presence known to her parents. She had hardly accomplished his transfer the next morning when she was surprised by a call from Reuben, accompanied by John Dibley, a constable, with a search-warrant. Molly informed the constable that she would show him over the house, but that Reuben must keep watch on the outside lest any Frenchman should escape during the search. She accordingly led Dibley from cellar to garret but by reason of many words about loose boards in the attic floor the cautious constable satisfied himself with a cursory glance from the stair-head that nothing was to be seen there but some "household stuff out of use," and declined her offer to pull it away that he might see no one was concealed behind it.

At sunset Amariah returned with her parents, but her mother was found to be so ill as to need putting to bed at once. Humphrey explained that word had been left for a doctor to come from New Bedford on the morrow; but as it then turned out the practitioner was away, and a Dutch doctor, named Schwarz, arrived in his place. Molly, observing him closely, noticed the use of a French word or two in his speech, and on her next stolen visit to François—their love for each other being now no secret to either of them—she told of his presence. François was startled, not knowing whether the stranger might prove friend or enemy.

Meanwhile Schwarz, in talking with Amariah, learned of the finding of the knife, and, seeking out Reuben, played upon his fears with suggestions of poisoned blades till the latter readily yielded up the knife to him. He at once recognized the dagger as belonging to François, and adroitly arranged that it should reach its owner at the hands of Molly, whose patient then knew that Dr. Schwarz was the Abbé Despard, who had escaped from Boston in disguise.

While Schwarz was attending upon Mrs. Wilder Molly's room was given up to his use, and there the friends met at last. After recounting their adventures the Abbé proposed that they should escape to Canada that night, and was much disturbed when he learned that his friend would not leave until Molly became his wife. Remonstrance was useless, and when François had gained her consent to marry him at three o'clock

that night, it was settled that the Abbé should perform the ceremony. She had heard the priest speak of his friend as Monsieur le Baron and had supposed Le Baron to be her lover's surname, and was willing enough to bear that name. Arraying herself in some India-muslin curtains embroidered by her grandmother, and some lace of her mother's for a veil, she was able to satisfy her maidenly desire for a white gown. She was married in her own chamber by the whispered voice of the priest, and a few moments later her husband and the Abbé departed, François to return and claim her when the war between French and English should be over.

Two years and more went by. Her rheumatic fever left Deborah Wilder a querulous semi-invalid, and in the following summer Humphrey died of sunstroke. Ere his death Molly confessed her secret, only to learn that he already partly knew; that he had seen her in her bridal dress through a partly open door, but that he never had doubted her. Deborah died the next season, leaving Molly alone, and it was settled that she should live with Mrs. Hetherford, but on the evening after the funeral François appeared.

Not long before his return he had learned of the peace, in his barrack quarters in Canada, and, through a letter to the Abbé, from the latter's sister Clotilde, news of his father's death soon followed by that of his brother Gaston in a duel. Clotilde added that Gaston's widow never had ceased to love his brother. The Abbé expected that his friend would at once return to the Old World, but, saying that his wife did not wish to live in France, he declined to go.

"Your wife? Mademoiselle Marie Wilder?"

"No, Madame Le Baron, as she herself named her future husband." The Abbé then announced that he had not actually married François to Mary Wilder, that he had used only the words of solemn troth-plight and one of the penitential psalms.

"I knew that you were to leave her immediately. I had seen you in love three or four times already; I knew that if you ever did return it would be easy to complete the ceremony begun, or to procure dispensation from the vows of betrothal. I deceived you for your own good."

François found it difficult to forgive this lack of honor in his friend, but he did so at length, and they parted, the Abbé for France and François for Falmouth. On the way he put up at an inn in Plymouth and was instrumental in preventing several ignorant practitioners from amputating the injured leg of the landlady, Betty Tilley. Under his care the diseased knee-joint was cured, and Dr. Le Baron then went on his way. It was arranged that François and Molly should be married by Squire Drew, of Falmouth, the next morning after his return; and Dame Hetherford, to whom Molly explained that she and Dr. Le Baron had long been betrothed, putting aside her former resentment, accompanied the pair to the magistrate's as a witness.

They were to pause at Plymouth for a day or two on the way to Boston, where François had intended their home should be, and while they were there three of the selectmen of the town called to invite him to remain as surgeon, physician, and apothecary, his skill in the matter of Dame Tilley's leg having been greatly admired. A tract of twenty-five acres outside the village and a house-lot on the main street within it were offered to him by the town, besides such fees as were customary. The offer was accepted with the proviso that while he was not to mention to any but the three selectmen the fact of his Catholic faith, no one was to seek to convert him to Protestantism.

On the Abbé's return to France he went to Montarnaud, where his sister Clotilde was nurse to the little daughter of the Comtesse Valerie; but in spite of the questioning of the Comtesse she learned nothing of François from the Abbé. From other sources, however, she ascertained that her brother-in-law was alive, and the Abbé was finally induced to impart such knowledge of François as he possessed.

A year after the marriage of Dr. Le Baron, the Abbé visited Plymouth and informed his friend that after consulting his ecclesiastical superiors he had learned that, garbled and shortened as was the ceremony in the Wilder farmhouse, it was an actual marriage, and he asked pardon for having led Dr. Le Baron into any doubt of the validity of the rite. He added that a secret Roman Catholic Mission had been established in Boston, and invited the doctor to visit him there, to which proposal François assented.

On arriving in Boston the doctor attended a secret mass, after which he was led to a room in which he found Valerie de Montarnaud. To repeated expressions of her affection he returned but cold replies, assuring her that there was no woman in the world whom it would be so impossible for him to love as herself. Leaving her, he inquired of the Abbé the motive for his plot, and the priest explained that he was in New England as a propagandist of the faith, and that the mission was supported by the Comtesse. As Dr. Le Baron was the heir, after her child, of nearly all the property of the Comtesse, she wished to consult him regarding its disposition and to bring him into sympathy with the work of the mission. This she had fancied could best be done in a personal interview. The hearer did not put entire faith in the priest's sincerity, but assured him that had his heart not been protected by a very vivid love of his wife, much harm might have come from the plot. The next day he returned to Plymouth.

When the Le Barons' first-born son, Lazarus, was a well-grown lad his father made a voyage as the medical attendant of the Marquis de Vieux, an eccentric and wealthy invalid, to be absent several months. Nothing was heard of the vessel in which they sailed till in three months news came to Plymouth that the *Belle Isle* had been captured by pirates and burned, only a single sailor escaping to tell the tale. A year later Reuben Hetherford again asked Molly to marry him, which she refused to do, and to support herself opened a dame school, having studied much with her husband and son. At a later period she was visited by the Abbé, who wished to take her son to be educated in France and assume the place there to which his birth entitled him, a proposal which Mrs. Le Baron declined with dignity. The Abbé wrote to the Comtesse of his failure, and she, resolving to manage the affair herself, presently appeared in Plymouth with the priest and her daughter, and on meeting with Mrs. Le Baron implored her to let the boy stand in his father's place, inherit the name and estates, and in due time wed his cousin, the daughter of Valerie. Mrs. Le Baron consented that the matter should be brought before the boy in his mother's presence; but before this could be done Dr. Le Baron appeared, having but recently escaped from the pirates

by whom he was supposed to have been killed. The question of the boy's future was now put before the father and, as before, the decision was left to young Lazarus whether he would take his father's rank and fortunes in France and become a stranger to his parents, or remain the son of a country physician. His answer was to be given to the Comtesse early the next morning, no further word being said to him on the subject by either parent.

At ten o'clock the next day Lazarus came to his parents, saying:

"They've sailed, father, and the gentleman bade me say good-by to you for all of them; and the lady added, 'And tell him we shall trouble him no more: he is safe.'"

MASSIMO TAPARELLI D'AZEGLIO

(Italy, 1798–1866)

ETTORE FIERAMOSCA; OR, THE CHALLENGE OF BARLETTA (1833)

The author of this story followed the examples of many of his contemporaries in imitating the style of Manzoni's *I Promessi Sposi;* but the *Fieramosca* won a high place on its own merits.

T the close of a day in April, 1503, the bell of St. Domenico, in Barletta, was sounding the last tocsins of the *Ave Maria.* His Grace the Lord Gonzales Hernandez had garrisoned his army in Barletta, where he awaited the tardy arrival of reënforcements from Spain; for his troops were inferior in numbers to the French, who besieged the town. Groups of Italian and Spanish soldiery were gathered on the piazza. A light vessel approached Barletta, a boat was lowered from her sides, and two men came ashore.

"Michele," said the one whose bearing had an air of superiority, "the time has come to be on thy guard. Thou knowest who I am. I'll say no more." The two companions passed on together to the "Inn of the Sun," where they found themselves in the company of a few soldiers belonging to Prospero Colonna, who then followed the fortunes of Spain. One fellow named Boscherino, on seeing the strangers, could not repress an exclamation—"The Duke!" A withering glance from one of the visitors silenced the surprised speaker.

Veleno, the host, was preparing food for his guests when a man dashed up with the news that Diego Garcia was returning with his cavalcade and three French prisoners. That night

"the Duke" sent for Boscherino, who received the summons in fear and trembling. Don Michele led him into the presence of his strange and terrible master.

"I have been recognized by thee, Boscherino," he said, "and I am glad. Tell no one thou hast seen me. Thou knowest I can reward thy services, nor will it improve thy prospects much to excite my displeasure." Boscherino bowed his head with reverence and left the room.

About two o'clock in the morning Diego Garcia di Paredes, with his men and prisoners, arrived at the inn. Veleno had ready a hot supper for the famished company. Hunger appeased, the conversation became general and gay; Inigo, a handsome young Spaniard, was alone morose over the loss of his steed, which La Motte, one of the French captains, had killed in the recent encounter. This same Baron La Motte began disparaging the Italians, calling them cowards and assassins; he cited the infamous deeds of the Pontiff and those of his son, Duke Valentino (Cæsar Borgia). Then the Frenchman spoke of one deed, in particular, perpetrated by the latter villain, who, failing in his designs upon the beautiful Ginevra di Montreale, poisoned her. At that time it was rumored Ettore Fieramosca had been her lover, and this fact explained his deep melancholy and apparent unsociability, though that did not interfere with his wide popularity in the army. Inigo praised Ettore, his friend, with all the ardor of a Spanish heart. La Motte sneered contemptuously, and declared that every Italian was a poltroon. Unable longer to restrain his passion, Inigo gave vent to his rage in a torrent of words.

"Were one of our Italians here, and above all, Fieramosca," he cried, "and you, who are a prisoner of Garcia, were only free, you would have occasion to learn that a French knight would have good use for both his hands to save his skin from the good sword of a single Italian."

Angry argument followed, and it was decided that when La Motte and his two fellow prisoners were ransomed, a challenge "to a battle in full armor, and to the last drop of blood," with a given number of combatants on either side, would be accepted.

The impetuous Inigo was too impatient to await the morning

light ere he could tell Fieramosca of the events. He reached the neighborhood of the castle of Barletta as the sun rose, and found his friend already awake. Fieramosca listened to the narrator with flashing eyes. He sprang to his feet. "Now is not the time for words but for deeds," he cried, and began naming the champions who were to be chosen for the combat. Upon one Brancaleone he depended most, for he knew him at once as a lofty-minded, magnanimous, and powerful man. "First of all we must confer with Signor Prospero Colonna, and afterward address ourselves to Gonzales for the safe-conduct," said Fieramosca to Inigo, as they walked along the streets toward the residence of the Colonna brothers. On the way they were joined by Brancaleone.

When the three friends reached their destination they were greeted by the flower of the Italian army. The only subject of discourse was the challenge. After a few moments Signor Prospero appeared. This wise Prince realized the extreme importance of the result of a combat at the present crisis, for Italy was vacillating between two contending sovereigns. He invited Fieramosca to render a minute account of the whole matter. Signor Prospero thereupon addressed his audience, and requested each man to write his name on paper, that he might submit the list to Gonzales. Within an hour that great captain conceded safe-conduct and an open field for ten men-at-arms, Ettore Fieramosca being the first chosen among the knights. To him, also, was accorded the honor of bearing the written challenge to the French camp. Brancaleone accompanied Fieramosca into the enemy's lines.

It was during this mission that Fieramosca confided his unhappy love adventure to Brancaleone, who listened with deep interest to its unfolding. When but a youth of sixteen, under the command of Count Bosio di Montreale, he had met his captain's daughter, and they loved at first sight. Fieramosca held himself the most blessed man in the realm of Naples; then war broke out, and he separated from Ginevra cursing fate. After being severely wounded he made his way to Rome, where he was horrified to hear what had befallen Ginevra in his absence. During a sack of Capua her father had been killed, and she forced into marrying a ruffianly captain, named

Claudio Grajano d'Asti. As if this were not evil enough, the infamous Cæsar Borgia, whose terrific acts were the subject of universal discussion, got wind of her enchanting loveliness, and his passion was aroused. Finding her virtue impregnable, he succeeded in administering a drug, which induced such profound coma that all said Ginevra was dead. Like others not in the secret of her suspended animation, Fieramosca thought his unfortunate lady was no more. He resolved to kill himself, and at night secretly stole into the church to die beside her bier. Prying open the coffin for one last look and kiss, the desperate lover was astounded by symptoms of life in the supposed corpse. A faithful servitor had luckily followed Fieramosca, and together they carried Ginevra from the sacristy. Hardly had this been done successfully ere Cæsar Borgia appeared, accompanied by about thirty soldiers. The foiled Duke raged around the deserted church, but was obliged to abandon his undertaking. All these incidents had occurred some years ago. Meanwhile Grajano had followed the fortunes of Cæsar Borgia, and the restored Ginevra did not seek to join him; instead she had placed herself under the protection of Fieramosca, and he had secured a refuge for her in the convent of St. Ursula on the island off the shores of Barletta. Not a soul knew of her whereabouts save Brancaleone, who now listened to the tale for the first time, and a Saracen maid, Zoraide, her constant companion, whom Fieramosca had once rescued from drowning.

At the conclusion of this extraordinary narrative, French cavaliers appeared to conduct the two Italian knights into the pavilion of their commander. Fieramosca, after repeating the insult of La Motte, read the challenge, which was promptly accepted, with the condition that the number of combatants be thirteen on each side in lieu of ten. The young Italian was confounded to find Grajano, the husband of Ginevra, in the retinue of the Duke de Nemours, and more nonplused when he learned that the rascal would fight in the forthcoming combat against his countrymen.

"Can you lift your sword with the French against the honor of the Italians?" exclained Fieramosca to Grajano, his eyes flashing fire.

"I fight for those who pay me!" said Grajano with a laugh.

Fieramosca hurled the epithet "Traitor!" at him, and the antagonists were unsheathing their swords when a multitude separated them, remembering that the person of a herald is held sacred. Ettore turned and excused himself for what had taken place, but even the Frenchmen admired his action. An hour later the herald and his companion passed over the drawbridge of the gate of Barletta. They proceeded at once to Gonzales, who thereupon proclaimed a truce till the combat was over; he also sent an invitation to the Duke de Nemours to join him at a *fête* he had planned for his daughter, Elvira, who was expected shortly in Barletta.

That same day the two strange guests at the "Inn of the Sun," who were Cæsar Borgia (Duke Valentino) and his henchman, Don Michele da Corella, began working out the former's purposes, which were to find Ginevra, and to attempt a secret political alliance with Gonzales. Don Michele conveyed a letter to the Spanish captain, who granted Cæsar Borgia an audience. While waiting in an antechamber Don Michele cultivated the acquaintance of the Podestà of Barletta, a garrulous, weak-minded old man, and he told the wily questioner of Fieramosca's incurable melancholy because of a hopeless love. Don Michele pretended he could cure the case provided he were allowed to pass five minutes with the fair object of unrequited love. The foolish Podestà promised to locate the unknown inamorata. Duke Valentino was pleased at the report of progress made. Donning a hooded mantle, which disguised him, he made his way unobserved to the castle, where the illustrious Gonzales temporized about the proposed league of forces, but offered his visitor a suite of rooms for his privacy while he stayed in Barletta.

As the vesper-hymn was chanted in the church of the convent of St. Ursula, Ginevra knelt in prayer, one that was brief and seldom varied. "Most Holy Virgin," she said, "help me not to love him. Give me courage to seek out Grajano, and to desire to find him." She made a resolution to tell Fieramosca of her intention to search for her husband, but when the young knight came to the island in his little boat at twilight she lacked the courage of declaration, while he equally failed to impart the fact that Grajano was alive and among French soldiers. Fiera-

mosca, however, gave eloquent tongue to describing the forthcoming conflict, and also the *fête*, proclaimed in honor of the Lady Elvira, for which a truce had been agreed upon. Ginevra forgot her worry, and Zoraide her embroidery, in giving attention to the exciting news. Their questions knew no bounds, especially regarding the personal appearance of the great captain's daughter.

Playing his part with the simple Podestà, Don Michele got him to point out Fieramosca; then, to allay any suspicion, the knave alleged that he possessed God-given miraculous powers, which he would exhibit that night to prove his interest beyond suspicion. From Gennaro, the gardener of St. Ursula and friend of the Podestà, Don Michele gathered that Ginevra lived at the convent. To settle all doubt in the mind of his dupe was now his task, so Don Michele, arranging with Boscherino to help him with a supernatural séance, led the Podestà to a ruined church and cemetery, where the intrepid villain began his conjurations. His companion was chattering with fright when a ghost slowly rose from one of the vaults. It pointed to a tomb, which Don Michele examined, and found therein a pile of gold coins. But a score of brigands at this moment burst in upon them, held pikes to their throats, and took the heap of money. The prisoners were bound, blindfolded, and led away on an unknown journey which lasted over an hour, then Don Michele felt himself pushed through a door, and down a number of steps, into a cell. The grating of a bolt assured the captive that there was little hope of escape. By the next morning Don Michele had correctly guessed that he was at the bottom of the tower which defended the convent of St. Ursula at the head of the bridge connecting city and island. It was commanded by Schwarzenbach, a guzzling German, in league with the bandits, who hid their booty, and held their captives in prospect of reward.

Don Michele was brought before this German mercenary, who tried to intimidate him, but the pupil of Cæsar Borgia turned the tables by declaring that an unseen witness (none other than Boscherino in the guise of a ghost) had already alarmed Barletta of the midnight attack. Schwarzenbach gave full credence to the assertion when his men reported the rapid

approach of cavalry. It naturally led him to conclude his prisoner was of high rank, and Don Michele embraced the opportunity to wring from him a promise to lend aid in the abduction of Ginevra at a given time. Suddenly an old hag broke into their midst crying out that the brigand leader, Pietraccio, had murdered the Podestà, and that police and soldiers were pursuing the band of cutthroats. She had barely finished when a body of cavalry, led by Ettore Fieramosca, drove on to the bridge. They had two prisoners. One was was the ferocious Pietraccio; the other was his mother, herself an outlaw of fearful character. She had been badly wounded in the latest encounter. Both were thrown into the dungeon recently occupied by Don Michele. Fieramosca, without being observed, slipped away and visited Ginevra, who was surprised at his unexpected appearance at that hour. He related the adventures of the night, and dwelt upon the heroic defense of the son made by the bandit-mother. Ginevra's compassion was excited, and she determined to go to her succor with simples. To accomplish this charity Fieramosca had to obtain the dungeon key from Schwarzenbach, but Don Michele anticipated him, and wheedling the key from the bewildered commander he descended the cellar to set Pietraccio free. He found the bandit-mother dying, and with her last breath she cursed Cæsar Borgia, who had ruined her life, and bade her son kill that fiend incarnate. Placing his poniard in the outlaw's hand Don Michele told him how to escape. In the features of the dead woman Don Michele had recognized those of the wayward wife of his youth!

It was the day on which Donna Elvira was expected, and the courtyard and terraces of Barletta Castle were magnificently decorated. Gonzales and his suite rode away to meet her. Prospero and Fabrizio Colonna were mounted on Arab steeds, while the herculean Diego Garcia was on the back of a wild Calabrian stallion. Ettore Fieramosca, arrayed in white satin, rode between Inigo and Brancaleone. On their way the cavalcade encountered the Duke de Nemours, with all his barons, coming to participate in the *fête*. Gonzales prayed him to accompany him, and a mile from the gates of the city Elvira and her train, which included the noble Vittoria Colonna,

appeared. Dismounting, Gonzales ran to embrace his child, and Ettore and Inigo, having been chosen to act as esquires to Elvira, came forward with an Andalusian jennet, which the young Italian, on bended knee, helped her to mount. Donna Elvira thanked him with a smile, and a glance of frank admiration.

The brilliant cortège entered Barletta, and dismounted at the castle, where apartments were assigned to the new guests. Soon after the games and tournaments took place. Bulls were loosed in the arena and killed by men, among whom Diego Garcia distinguished himself. Then the knights entered the lists and fought against one another; in these combats Inigo won high honors for the Spanish, and Bajardo was acclaimed the greatest lance among the French. But Grajano d'Asti, more by good luck than skill, came off victor of the day, much to the chagrin of Fieramosca, who was compelled to remain beside Donna Elvira, and surrounded by noblest barons. Again Ettore vowed to inform Ginevra that her detestable husband was alive and in French service. Little did Elvira imagine his train of thought; the coquettish Spanish maiden had indeed begun to look on her handsome knight as a possible lover. Two in that vast assemblage watched Elvira and Ettore with painful emotions. One was Vittoria Colonna, who held a deep affection for the girl, and knew her susceptibility; the other was Zoraide, the Saracen attendant on Ginevra, whose hidden passion for Fieramosca had been only vaguely suspected by her mistress. Zoraide had persuaded Gennaro to take her to the tournament that morning, and she departed without waking Ginevra. When she did awake a hundred wild fantasies crowded on her brain. She was suspicious of Zoraide for leaving her so mysteriously, and even doubted Ettore. Weary of her own thoughts, she walked. The tower which guarded the entrance to the island was utterly abandoned; Schwarzenbach and his men had gone to the *fête*. Suddenly a wretched, miserable man crept out of the bushes and threw himself on her mercy. It was the hunted Pietraccio. Compassion compelled Ginevra to hide him in a secret place under her house, where she brought him food.

Zoraide and Gennaro returned, the former evasive of questions, but the gardener garrulous about the recent exhibition.

He rattled on, relating all the details of how Fieramosca and Elvira were such a matchless pair, and that it was rumored they were to be married, and of how a certain Grajano d'Asti had won the trophy. Of course this news fearfully agitated Ginevra, who sought refuge in prayer. After long agony of soul, the supplicant decided to leave the convent that night by sea to seek her husband. "I will do right without thinking of the consequences," she said firmly. "The agonies I am going to encounter will only be the expiation of my errors." While Ginevra was in the depths of anguish, Pietraccio in his concealment overheard a conversation between Schwarzenbach and Boscherino, in which the worthy pair discussed the abduction of Ginevra that evening, and he learned that the instigator, Cæsar Borgia, was in Barletta. At the first opportunity the bloodthirsty brigand swam to shore, bent on his mission of revenge.

Meanwhile all was gayety in the audience-hall of Gonzales, where a sumptuous repast was served. The fervid heart of Elvira was now entirely given up to Ettore. Even when a cloud settled over his brow, she believed herself the cause, though his mind was occupied with the unfortunate advent of Grajano d'Asti. One of Ettore's boon companions, Fanfulla by name, had become completely fascinated gazing upon the beauty of Elvira. Envy and a tinge of ill will possessed him at the absorbed attention she gave Fieramosca, to whom Fanfulla once playfully whispered: "But thou wilt pay me for this some day."

The gala-day of Gonzales wound up with presentations of plays, followed by a grand ball. In the courtyard a squalid man wandered unnoticed—it was Pietraccio seeking to assassinate Cæsar Borgia, and to give warning to Fieramosca of Ginevra's peril. All unconscious of imminent danger Ettore danced with the enamored Elvira, who was rash enough to propose their going out on the terrace after that dance. Fanfulla heard these words, and when a few moments later Fieramosca excused himself to his fair partner, pleading headache, the jealous fellow watched his exit; he was astonished to see Fieramosca rush from the place without cap or mantle, but he did not know that the cause of this violent action was a note, dropped at the young knight's feet, warning him of the plot to steal Ginevra.

Inigo and Brancaleone also observed the precipitous flight, and they followed Ettore, whom they found talking excitedly with Pietraccio. Everything was then explained, and the men, securing armor and swords, set off in a boat for St. Ursula. Fieramosca and his companions sped over the dark waters, passed unheeded one lonely figure in a little boat, and came upon another boat, holding six men and the prone figure of a woman. A fierce fight ensued, during which Pietraccio was knocked senseless in the bottom of the enemies' skiff; Fieramosca was wounded by a dagger-thrust in the hand of Don Michele, but the unconscious female was rescued. When her saviors reached the convent they saw that the woman was Zoraide, but the closest search failed to reveal Ginevra anywhere. Despair seized upon Fieramosca, and with it a terrible illness, caused by the dagger, which was a poisoned one. Zoraide recovered from her swoon and began administering to the stricken knight, who became delirious.

Of contrasting character were the events occurring at the castle. Fanfulla watched Elvira saunter out upon the terrace, and, securing the cloak and cap belonging to Fieramosca, joined her. In the semi-darkness the daughter of Gonzales was deceived by the subterfuge. The moon shone unexpectedly, and a piercing scream rang out from below. Elvira and Fanfulla hurriedly separated for fear of the crowd that might be attracted to the terrace by the sound of the woman's voice.

That cry rang in the ears of the Duke Valentino, Cæsar Borgia, as he dozed in his apartment on the ground-floor of the castle. Jumping up he made his way to the shore, where he discovered a woman unconscious in a boat. He carried her to his rooms. Conceive his astonishment on beholding the face of Ginevra, pallid and piteous. She had fallen insensible at witnessing the scene in the moonlight between Elvira and the false Fieramosca. Cæsar Borgia wasted no time in executing his foul intentions upon Ginevra. Tears and pleadings were of no avail. The wild anguish and despair of the wretched woman were indescribable, but her fate was fixed and irrevocable! Don Michele returned in time to help carry the inanimate form of Ginevra back to her little skiff. He saw blood-marks on her left side. Preparations were then made for departure, and the terrible

Cæsar Borgia, with his servitors, left Barletta in a vessel awaiting them. Pietraccio, the prisoner of Don Michele, attempted to kill the fiendish Duke Valentino, but that son of Satan plunged a poniard in the young bandit's heart, kicked the palpitating body, and ordered it flung overboard.

Leaving Fieramosca in Zoraide's care, Brancaleone and Inigo went to Gonzales with the story of the night's adventures. A search was instituted too late to catch Cæsar Borgia, though they found his victim. Ginevra revived long enough to bless Elvira, who she supposed was Fieramosca's *fiancée*, for she had been witness to the scene on the terrace which had provoked her cry of agony. After receiving the sacrament she prayed for their happiness, then died. This calamity was kept secret from Fieramosca, because of his condition, which was convalescent, under the care of Zoraide, and because of the approaching date of combat with the French, in which he hoped to distinguish himself. Brancaleone assured him that Ginevra was in good keeping, though she could not see him until after the great test of arms. Ettore was not satisfied by this explanation, but contented himself with preparing for the field.

The memorable day of the combat dawned. Twenty-six knights, in dazzling armor, ranged themselves in line for a desperate contest. Long and furious was the fighting, each man determined to conquer his foe. Brancaleone clave the skull of Grajano d'Asti in twain. La Motte was unhorsed and defeated by Fieramosca after a terrible conflict. At last the judges descended from the tribunal and approached the scene of blood, causing the trumpets to be sounded, and proclaiming in a loud voice that the Italians had conquered.

Vittoria Colonna considered it her duty to break the news of Ginevra's death to Fieramosca, but when it came to the point she could not tell him, though she said Ginevra was again at St. Ursula. Mounting his faithful steed Ettore rode on, and over the bridge to the island, where he arrived in time to see the body of his beloved lowered into an open tomb. Zoraide was sobbing on her knees. Ettore said not a single word. He was as rigid and as pallid as the corpse. Remounting his charger he dashed into the night, which was a tempestuous one. No friend of Fieramosca, no living soul of those times ever saw

him afterward, living or dead. Some poor mountaineers of Gargano, who were tending their coal-pits, related to the peasants that one night in the midst of a wild storm they had seen a strange vision of an armed knight, on the peaks of some inaccessible rocks that overhung a steep declivity near the sea. At first a few only reported the vision, but the number increased, and at last the whole country around adopted the firm belief it was the archangel St. Michael. . . . . In the year 1616, a tract of rocky seashore under Mt. Gargano had been left bare by the retreating of the sea. A fisherman found lying between the rocks a heap of iron, almost consumed by the marine salt and by rust, and underneath he found human bones and the carcass of a horse. The reader may draw his own conclusions. For us, our story is done.

IRVING BACHELLER

(United States, 1859)

EBEN HOLDEN (1900)

This is the first of Irving Bacheller's series of successful novels. Two tales from his pen—*The Master of Silence* and *The Unbidden Guest*—had been published previously, but they had attracted comparatively little attention. *Eben Holden* was begun as a juvenile story, but when about ten chapters had been written the purpose was altered and it was recast for adult readers. The scenes in the north country described in this novel are, many of them, such as were familiar in fact to the author's boyhood; and many of the characters entering into the story were at least suggested by persons whom he had actually known. The book was not copyrighted in Great Britain, its great popularity there having been unforeseen by either its author or its American publisher, the result being that it has been supplied to the British public in various forms, from *éditions de luxe* to sixpenny pamphlets. *Eben Holden* was dramatized in 1901. We present here the author's own condensation of the story.

EBEN HOLDEN, a cheerful old bachelor with a rare knack of story-telling, had worked on my father's farm in northern Vermont since long before I was born. When I was a lad of six my parents were drowned, leaving me the only surviving member of the family. The farm was not worth the mortgage, and everything had to be sold. Uncle Eb, as I had learned affectionately to call him, wished to keep me, but he was a farm-hand without any home or visible property, and not, therefore, in the mind of the authorities, a proper guardian. Some persons were for sending me to the county house, but it was finally decided to turn me over to the care of a dissolute uncle, with some allowance for my keep.

The night before they were to take me from the old home, Uncle Eb lifted me into a large pack-basket, to the rim of which he had tied bundles of provisions, and, strapping it to his shoulder, set out afoot in the darkness in a westerly direction.

Traveling thus by night and resting in concealment by day, we journeyed for weeks, with no particular destination, and only the one immediate purpose in Uncle Eb's mind of getting beyond the reach of those who would have taken me from him.

After many interesting experiences in the great Adirondack forest, wherein Uncle Eb's wisdom, courage, and knowledge of woodcraft were repeatedly tested, we one night took refuge from a thunderstorm in an old cabin, apparently deserted. Here we first met "the night man," a mysterious person of whom I was to learn more in later years. At first he angrily ordered us away, but Uncle Eb succeeded finally in gaining his friendship and, as I afterward had reason to believe, in tempting him into confidence that had been given to no other person.

From this strange man we learned where we were. "Down the hill is Paradise Valley, in the township o' Faraway," he told us. "It's the end o' Paradise road, an' a purty country. Been settled a long time, an' the farms are big an' prosperous—kind uv a land o' plenty. That big house at the foot o' the hill is Dave Brower's. He's the richest man in the valley."

In the morning we trudged down the hill to Mr. Brower's house. As we turned in at the gate a barefooted little girl, a bit older than I, with red cheeks and blue eyes, and long curly hair that shone like gold in the sunlight, came running out to meet us and led me up to the doorstep, while Uncle Eb was talking with David Brower. Presently Mr. Brower came and lifted me by the shoulders, high above his head, and shook me as if to test my mettle. Then he led me into the house where his wife was working.

"What do you think of this small bit of a boy?" he asked.

She had already knelt on the floor and put her arms about my neck and kissed me.

"Ain' no home," said he. "Come all the way from Vermont with an ol' man. They're worn out, both uv 'em. Guess we'd better take 'em in awhile."

"Oh, yes, mother—please, mother!" put in the little girl, who was holding my hand. "He can sleep with me. Please let him stay."

"David," said the woman, "I couldn't turn the little thing away. Won't ye hand me those cookies?"

And so our life in Paradise Valley began. In ten minutes I was playing my first game of "I spy" with little Hope Brower, among the fragrant stooks of wheat in the field back of the garden.

David Brower and his wife had settled in Paradise Valley when they were young, and had seen the clearing widen, until now, far as the eye could reach, were the neat white houses of the settlers. Many years before our arrival there Nehemiah Brower, their eldest child, then a lad of sixteen, had killed another boy by accident and run away. Some time later word had been received that Nehemiah had been drowned on his way to Van Diemen's Land. There was a wide-spread superstition in the valley that "the night man," who was never seen in the daylight, but whose tall form was often observed skulking in the dark, was the ghost of the boy Nehemiah had killed.

I could not have enjoyed my new home more if I had been born in it. Mr. and Mrs. Brower were all that a father and mother could be to me, while Hope filled the place of sister and playmate. True, she sometimes annoyed me by too effusive expressions of affection. Once, for instance, when we were going to mill in the big sled with Uncle Eb, she embraced me and said that she loved me very much, adding that when we were big she was going to have me for a husband. This embarrassed me, I remember. It seemed unmanly to be petted like a doll.

"I hate to be kissed," I said, pulling away from her, at which Uncle Eb laughed heartily.

The day came when I would have given half my life for the words I held so cheaply then.

It was Jed Feary, a local poet, who discovered that I was not likely to make a farmer. When I was still a little chap he called Uncle Eb's attention to my slender hands, and said: "Folks here in the valley think o' nuthin' but hard work, most uv 'em. Toil an' slave an' scrimp an' save—thet's about all we think uv. 'Tain't right, Holden. When thet boy is old enough t' take care uv himself, let him git out o' this country. I tell ye he'll never make a farmer, an' if he marries an' settles down here he'll git t' be a poet, mebbe, er some such shif'less cuss, an' die in the poorhouse."

"Singular man!" said Uncle Eb, when Feary had gone. "But anyone thet picks him up fer a fool 'll find him a counterfeit."

In time others came to believe that I was planned by nature for something besides farm work, and Mr. Brower, who had now become father in name as well as in fact, decided that I should have a good education.

The winter that marked the end of my fifteenth year was a time of new things. Then I began to enjoy the finer humors of life in Faraway—to see with understanding, and to feel the infinite in the ancient forest, in the everlasting hills, in the deep of heaven, in all the ways of men.

Hope Brower was now near woman grown, with a beauty of face and form that was the talk of the countryside. Of late years something had come between us. Long ago we had fallen out of each other's confidence. Uncle Eb had once told, before company, how she had kissed me and bespoken me for a husband that day in the big sled, and while the others laughed loudly, she had gone out of the room crying. Ever since then she had seemed to shun me.

Uncle Eb one day suggested that I invite her to an entertainment at the schoolhouse that night.

I took his advice. She looked at me, blushing, and said she would ask her mother. She did, and we walked to the schoolhouse together, her hand holding my arm, timidly, the most serious pair that ever struggled with the problems of deportment on such an occasion. On the way home she asked me what part of the entertainment I enjoyed most.

"Your company," I said, with a fine air of gallantry.

"Honestly?"

"Honestly. I want to take you to a dance at Rickard's some time."

"Maybe I won't let you," she said.

"Wouldn't you?"

"You'd better ask me some time and see."

"I shall. I wouldn't ask any other girl."

How far my aroused courage might have carried me I cannot say. We were interrupted by a woman who overtook us.

The next autumn Hope, who had a fine voice, went away to study music, and I to the academy at Hillsboro.

In the spring we had returned and were in the garden, the playground of our childhood, when I confessed my love. A flood of color came into her cheeks, as she stood a moment looking down in silence.

"I shall keep your secret," she said tenderly, "and when you are through college—and you are older—and I am older—and you love me as you do now—I hope—I shall love you, too—as—I do now." After a moment she added: "Do not speak of it again until we are older, and, if you never speak again, I shall know you—you do not love me any longer."

In my second year at college Hope went away to continue her studies in New York. She was to live in the family of John Fuller, a friend of Mr. Brower, who had left Faraway years before and made his fortune in the big city. The evening before she was to go Uncle Eb slyly beckoned her and me into his room, and, counting a hundred dollars from a great roll which he took from his trunk, handed it to Hope, saying: "Put thet away in yer wallet. Might come handy when ye're away f'm hum."

She kissed him tenderly.

"Put it 'n yer wallet an' say nuthin'—not a word t' nobody," he said.

Then he counted over a like amount for me.

After my graduation at college, Uncle Eb and I took the train for New York one summer day in 1860. I was leaving to seek my fortune in the big city; Uncle Eb was off for a holiday, and to see Hope and bring her home for a short visit. She was now very busy with her studies and with her singing in a fashionable church. Besides, Mrs. Fuller, as I had learned, had taken her a good deal into society and encouraged a certain wealthy young man named Livingstone to pay much attention to her. I had lost hope of winning her, but as we sped on Uncle Eb encouraged me.

David Brower and Horace Greeley had been playmates in their boyhood, and I had a letter in my pocket from my adopted father to the great editor. When Mr. Greeley had read it and asked me many questions about its writer, I told him that I wanted to work on the *Tribune*.

"Well," said he, turning back to his desk, "go and write me an article about rats."

"Would you advise—" I began, when he interrupted me.

"The man that gives advice is a bigger fool than the man that takes it. Go and do your best."

The thought of rats suggested ships and wharves and sewers, so I went down to the water-front. There I met a big, good-natured Irish policeman, who went about with me and did not leave me until I was on my way to Mrs. Fuller's, loaded with fact and fable and good dialect with a flavor of the sea in it.

Uncle Eb and Hope expressed great pleasure when I told them I had a job on the *Tribune*. I was for going at once to write my article, but Hope said it was time to be getting ready for dinner.

At that elaborate meal I met many handsome men and women, among them Mr. Livingstone and a Mr. John Trumbull, the latter a big, full-bearded man who, as I learned, had made the acquaintance of the family by snatching Hope from under a horse's feet and saving her life.

"Seems as if it were fate," said Hope. "I had seen him so often and wondered who he was."

After dinner Uncle Eb and John Trumbull went to the smoking-room, where I found them talking earnestly in a corner. Mrs. Fuller afterward told me that Mr. Trumbull was a speculator. "A strange man," she added, "successful, silent, and, I think, in love."

That evening Hope and I had a few moments together in a corner of the large parlor. "I've heard how well you did last year," she said, "and how nice you were to the girls. A friend of mine wrote me all about it. How attentive you were to that little Miss Brown!"

"Only decently polite," I answered. "One has to have somebody or—or—be a monk."

"One has to have somebody!" she said quickly, as she picked at the flower on her bosom and looked down at it soberly. "That is true—one has to have somebody, and, you know, I haven't had any lack of company myself. By the way, I have news to tell you. I am going to England with Mrs. Fuller." A moment later she said: "My friend writes that you are in love."

"She is right," I said. "I am madly, hopelessly in love. It is time you knew it, Hope, and I want your counsel."

She rose quickly and turned her face away. "Do not tell me!" she said coldly. "Do not speak of it again. I forbid you!"

Before I could speak Mrs. Fuller had come through the doorway. "Come, Hope," she said, "I cannot let you sit up late. You are worn out, my dear."

That night Uncle Eb came to my room, and I told him that Hope didn't care for me.

"Don't believe it," he answered calmly. "Thet woman—she's tryin' t' keep her away from ye, but 'twon't make no differ'nce. Not a bit."

"Hope has got too far ahead of *me*," I said. "She can marry a rich man if she wishes to, and I don't see why she shouldn't."

"There's things goin' t' happen," Uncle Eb whispered. "I can't tell ye what er when, but they're goin' t' happen an' they're goin' t' change everything."

Instead of going home with Uncle Eb, Hope went first to Saratoga, and then abroad with Mrs. Fuller.

When my article was written I took it to Mr. Greeley, who instructed his city editor to read it and, if it were well done, to give me a place on the *Tribune* staff. The city editor gave me little encouragement, saying the staff was full, but he took my address and said I would hear from him when he wanted me. I never heard from him.

That evening I chanced to meet Mr. Trumbull, and we took a long walk together.

"Come!" said he, after a silence, "talk to me. Tell me—what are you going to do?"

I told him of my plans, so far as they had matured.

"You love Hope," he said. "You will marry her?"

"If she will have me," I answered.

"You must wait," he said. "Time enough!"

I was soon nearly out of money and at my wits' end. In this plight I ran upon Fogarty, the policeman who had been the good angel of my one hopeful day in journalism. His manner invited my confidence, and I told him I needed work—any kind of honest work. He led me to a gang of Irishmen working in the street near by and induced the boss to give me work. I began

next morning. We were paving Park Place, and presently I saw Mr. Greeley standing near and looking down at me.

"Do you mean to tell me that you'd rather work than beg or borrow?" he said, after beckoning me to him.

"That's about it," I answered.

"And ain't ashamed of it?"

"Ashamed! Why?" said I, not quite sure of his meaning, for I had learned that all work was honorable.

"I guess you'll do for the *Tribune*," he laughed. "Come and see me at twelve to-morrow." He gave me a place on the local staff and invited me to dine with him at his home that evening.

In the course of my duty I went to report the ball given in honor of the Prince of Wales at the Academy of Music. There I saw Mrs. Fuller in one of the boxes, and made haste to speak with her. She had just landed, having left Hope to study for a time in the Conservatory at Leipsic.

"Mrs. Livingstone is with her," said she, "and they will return together in April."

"Mrs. Fuller, did she send any word to me?" I inquired anxiously. "Did she give you no message?"

"None," she said coldly, "except one to her mother and father, which I have sent in a letter to them."

In 1861 I resigned from the *Tribune* and went to the war. At Washington I received a letter from Uncle Eb informing me that Hope, in one of her recent letters, had said she had not heard from me, but had heard from somebody else that I was going to be married. "You had oughter write her a letter, Bill," Uncle Eb wrote. "Looks to me so you haint used her right. She's a-comin' hum in July."

I wrote immediately to Uncle Eb, telling him of the letters I had sent to Hope, and of my effort to see her.

I went to the war in despair, and was badly wounded in the battle of Bull Run, and left on the field. Far into the night I lay near to death. Then I heard a voice calling my name again and again, coming nearer and nearer. I answered with a feeble cry, and presently a mighty man had picked me up and was making off. The jolt of his step seemed to be breaking my arms at the shoulder. Fainter and fainter I grew, until my

own voice seemed to whisper to me: "My God! this is no man. This is Death severing the soul from the body." From then till I came to myself in the little church at Centreville I remember nothing. In a few weeks I was removed to Washington, where I soon recovered my strength and set out for home.

When I arrived at Jersey City, Uncle Eb was there to meet me. As I was greeting him I heard a lively rustle of skirts. Two dainty gloved hands laid hold of mine; a sweet voice spoke my name. There, beside me, stood the tall, erect figure of Hope. Our eyes met, and, before there was any thinking of propriety, I had her in my arms and was kissing her and she was kissing me.

Explanations followed later. She had not received my letters, as I suspected. Mrs. Fuller had wished her to marry young Livingstone. "But for Uncle Eb," she said, "I think I should have done so, for I had given up all hope of you."

We went to an inn, and late that night when we wakened Uncle Eb and told him that we were to be man and wife, he said: "You go into the other room and wait a minute, and I'll put on my clothes an' then you'll hear me talk some conversation."

As we neared home in the north country, Uncle Eb told us that David Brower had recently lost a large sum of money in speculation and was low in spirits, but that he would soon rise again. The following Christmas Eve we learned what he meant. David and Elizabeth Brower were facing the prospect of losing their home with pathetic bravery when Uncle Eb handed them a check for twenty thousand dollars, saying it was from their son Nehemiah.

"Why, Nehemiah is dead," said David.

Then Uncle Eb opened the door and a tall, bearded man came in.

"Mr. Trumbull!" Hope exclaimed, rising.

"David an' Elizabeth Brower," said Uncle Eb, "the dead has come to life. I give ye back yer son—Nehemiah."

Nehemiah, whom I had known as John Trumbull, sat between his father and mother, holding a hand of each, telling his story far into the night. When he was a mere boy he had accidentally shot another boy with an old gun which he sup-

posed was not loaded. He had often quarreled with that boy, and some thought he had killed him purposely, so, to escape arrest, he ran away and went to sea. Near Van Diemen's Land a shipmate was washed overboard and drowned. Nehemiah placed a letter in the drowned man's box, saying his real name was Nehemiah Brower, son of David Brower, of Faraway, New York, and the captain wrote to Mr. Brower that his son was dead. Six years later Nehemiah sailed into the harbor of Quebec, and the desire to see those he loved had tempted him to Paradise Valley. Here he concealed himself in the woods by day, coming out at night to watch over the old home and occasionally to peep through a window at his friends.

"I made my home in a concealed cave," he went on; "caught a cub panther and a baby coon. They grew up with me there and were the only friends I had, except Uncle Eb."

"Uncle Eb!" I exclaimed.

"You know how I met him," Nehemiah continued, addressing me. "You were not as big and heavy then as you were the night I carried you from Bull Run battle-field. Well, Uncle Eb won my confidence that night in the old cabin, and I told him my history. Ever since that he has been my friend, guide, and helper. But for him I should have gone crazy in my loneliness. Indeed, I was half crazy when he urged me to go out among men and gave me a thousand dollars to start me in business. I walked through the woods to Utica, where I bought fashionable clothing, and went to New York. You know the rest, save that my introduction to Hope was not so accidental as it seemed. I had long kept pretty close watch over her."

"I declare!" said he, beaming down upon David and Elizabeth Brower. "In all my born days I never see sech fun. It's tree-menjious, I tell ye. Them 'et takes care uv others'll be took care uv—'less they do it o' purpose."

"Three cheers for Uncle Eb!" I demanded. And we gave them.

Hope and I were married, and made our home in the great city, whence every summer we return to the old fireside and sit by the graves of those we loved and think of the last words of Uncle Eb, now cut in marble:

I ain't afraid.
'Shamed o' nuthin' I ever done.
Allwas kep' my tugs tight,
Never swore 'less 'twas necessary,
Never ketched a fish bigger'n 'twas
Er lied in a hoss trade
Er shed a tear I didn't hev to.
Never cheated anybody but Eben Holden.
Goin' off somewheres Bill—dunno the way nuther.
Dunno if it's east er west er north er south
Er road er trail
But I ain't afraid.

WOLCOTT BALESTIER

(United States, 1861–1891)

BENEFITS FORGOT (1892)

This story, completed the year before its writer's death, and published the year following this event, appearing first serially in the *Century Magazine*, was the result of Mr. Balestier's study of Leadville, Colorado, visited by him in 1885. Two years earlier he had made a brief sojourn in this portion of Colorado, which had profoundly impressed his imagination; at this time the air in this vicinity proved too bracing for him, and he made but a short stay. His second trip, made in the company of his sister, lasted many months, and the glimpses of the strange life of the West remained, to the end of this author's career, the most vivid and exciting which his memory contained. At this time Mr. Balestier was more than ever inspired with the desire to write earnestly, and it was in Colorado that the first crude sketch was made for a book, which was afterward rewritten as *Benefits Forgot*. This novel, born in the mining-camps of Colorado, was completed in the congenial atmosphere of the Old World, where the writer spent his final years.

AMES DEED'S wedding-day dawned, and as his eyes measured the crisp and sparkling Colorado morning he had the pleasant feeling that the sun was shining especially for him. In a few hours he was to marry Margaret Derwenter, the woman of his choice, and his heart was overflowing with joy and happiness. Up to this time his life had been one of many vicissitudes, and he looked forward to his coming marriage with unspeakable joy and satisfaction.

Ten years earlier, he had left New York with his two motherless boys, broken-hearted at the death of his wife, whom he had devotedly loved, and shattered in health. He had felt no incentive to live when he was forced to leave his home and seek a new and strange habitation in the West; but gradually the lethargy of sorrow and ill health fell from him and he became himself again. He resumed his practise of law in the

town of Maverick, and also entered into the mining interests of the new country, which eventually brought him satisfactory returns. Deed was an indulgent father to his boys, and endeavored to make up to them by his affection for the loss they had sustained. He was kind and generous to a fault, but had a quick temper, which, when aroused, would carry him beyond reason or justice. Upon reaching manhood, Jasper, the elder of Deed's two sons, who had always shown much sagacity and business ability, was placed by his father in charge of his large ranch, valued at one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. This he managed with most gratifying results, much to the pride and satisfaction of his father, who took him into partnership and for the term of five years put into his hands his brother Philip's share of the ranch. Jasper suggested the making of a written deed of the property to himself, to which his father, who had full confidence in him, willingly consented, feeling sure that his brother's interests would be to him as his own. However, when Deed was on the point of remarrying, he felt it best to have his sons equally provided for, and wrote to Jasper, who was temporarily absent, asking him to make over to Philip his share of the property.

To his horror and amazement, upon the morning of his marriage he received a letter from Jasper refusing to relinquish what he had unfairly gained, and Deed's eyes were opened to the perfidy of his son's real character.

Filled with rage and disappointment, his one desire was to avenge this wrong, no matter what the cost might be. He determined to sell the ranch for the paltry sum of twenty-five thousand dollars in order to ruin Jasper, not stopping to consider how the transaction would affect either Philip or himself.

He went to Margaret Derwenter, while in this vengeful mood, and told her what he intended to do. She tried in every way to set the matter before him in its true light and endeavored to turn him from his purpose, but he was so full of wrath that he would not listen to reason.

"James! James!" begged Margaret, "consider the life of remorse you are condemning yourself to. Distrust the false passion and pride that tells you you are right now. You

are wrong! Listen to me, who have nothing to gain by telling you so. You are wrong."

"Have I not the right to make him suffer as I suffer?" he asked coldly. "The thing's done, I tell you."

He was about to leave the room, but she called—

"James!"

"Well?"

"You must not." She caught her breath, and sat hastily upon the sofa.

"Pshaw!"

"I tell you, you must not. I will not have it. I have my rights, as well as you; my rights as your wife to be. I will not have your property—my property—thrown away for a whim."

He came toward her quickly. She shrank involuntarily. Her face was white; she set her teeth.

"Do you mean that?"

She nodded painfully.

"It would have been simpler to say so in the beginning—not to say honester," he said, with slow bitterness. "You might have spared me the pain of knowing that you could promise to give it all up, when you thought yourself secure from being held to your word. You might have saved your sermons."

It was like the agony of death to hear these things from him; but she shut her lips, and bore it. If she spoke now, she knew that her tone must belie her words.

"A moment ago you said," he went on coldly, "that you had nothing to gain. Pardon me if I say that you seem to have had much. It may make you sleep easier to-night, if I tell you that you have gained it."

He put his hands to his head in bewilderment, caught up his hat, and, without a glance at her, left the room not to return.

Margaret, who was a woman of noble character, knew that this frenzied condition was caused by grief and disappointment; and, though deserted upon her wedding-day, she remained true to the man she loved.

Philip, meanwhile, who was ignorant of the state of affairs, set out from an adjacent town, where he had been engaged in working two mines which belonged to Jasper and himself, in

order to be present at his father's wedding. He was accompanied on this trip by his friend Lenox Cutter, a New York man of rich and influential antecedents, who had sought the West in order to try to forget the girl whom he had loved for years and who had refused him.

The line of travel, which the men took on horseback, included a mountain-pass, and while in this dangerous locality they were overtaken by a heavy snow-storm which made their progress almost impossible. They came up with another party, caught in the same predicament, which included a young girl who was already overcome by cold and exhaustion. Deed and Cutter aided in restoring her to consciousness, and led the way to a cave, with the location of which they were familiar, and which afforded them protection from the storm. The members of the rescued party were the Reverend Mr. Maurice, an Episcopal clergyman, his daughter Dorothy, a beautiful girl, and Richard Messiter, a friend and admirer of the young woman. Their journey proved to have been a compulsory one, as Mr. Maurice, who had made himself unpopular as a pastor by refusing to read the burial service for two miners who had died of smallpox, had been run out of the town where he had been living. Dorothy, who was in ignorance of the cause of their sudden departure, maintained great admiration and respect for her father, who had a pleasant personality in spite of his weak character. In course of time the snow-bound party were able to continue their journey, and they reached their destination, Maverick, where Philip was greeted with the news regarding his father's postponed marriage.

He at once sought out his father, with whom he had a stormy interview, as the latter failed to understand his son's sympathetic attitude, and saw in his remarks only veiled resentment for the wrong that had been done him.

"Say it, Phil! Say it!" he cried hoarsely. "Don't sit there dumb. I know what you think. You're right. I sold you out. I signed away your rights. I did you out of your future with a foolish, amiable stroke of the pen. I trusted a scoundrel, and you've to pay for it. I wanted to do the handsome thing by Jasper, and I did it at your expense. It's been your treat

all along, Phil," he said with a miserable smile, "though you didn't know it."

Philip leaped up. "Great heaven, father! you haven't been thinking that I was shouting around about my miserable little share in that business? Surely you don't think that I could name it beside your trouble, much less be fooling with the poor question of blame? I should think Jasper was enough to blame for half a dozen."

His father smiled sadly. "What Jasper has done cannot excuse me. He couldn't have done it if I hadn't thrown the way open to him—if I hadn't trusted him."

"Wouldn't a father trust his own son, I should like to know? Is it a thing he must answer for?"

"My God, Phil! hasn't he answered for it—isn't he answering for it, will he ever get to the end of answering for it?" He covered his eyes.

"I know, father," said Philip, taking a turn across the room. "Ingratitude is like that. It hurts—it keeps on hurting."

"Yes," owned Deed grimly, "it hurts."

"Surely it's enough, then. Pray don't bother about me. You would have done it for me in the same situation. Do you think I don't know that I never gave you the chance? I've not been doing the approved thing. I never have. When I do, it will be time enough for me to trot out my grievance."

"Oh, Phil, I've not been fair to you!" It was the expression of his sense of his whole course toward him from boyhood; but Philip took it to refer to the contract. "Pshaw, father! I shall rub along for the few years left of the partnership. What difference can it make? I shall be the better for having to make my own way for a while."

Philip, like Margaret, failed to make Deed see what moral injury he was doing himself by repaying one wrong with another, the father persistently remaining blind and obdurate.

"Phil!" he cried miserably, "you're not going back on me!"

"Going back on you, father?" Philip snatched the hand hanging by his side. "I'm trying to save you. You're letting yourself in for a lifetime of remorse. You'll kick yourself for this thing before you are a week older. Think, father! Can you afford to do a wrong like this to Jasper? Where will there

ever be an end to it? 'Twill make you unhappy, father. That's what I'm thinking of. And the unhappiest part of the whole business will be when you see that after all it wasn't fair."

"Fair!" cried his father hoarsely. "Fair! Oh, the devil!" He sat down, clenching his hands. The blood rose in his face.

"Did you wish to be unfair?"

"Yes!" shouted Deed. "Yes! I wish to be all that you imply! I wish to be unfair to both of you."

"Both of us!" exclaimed Philip, turning pale.

"Oh, I know what you think; I wish to be unfair to Jasper, and to do it I must be doubly unfair to you, and I didn't care. You don't say it. You talk of Jasper."

"Father, can you think—"

"Yes, more than you say."

Philip grew white about the nostrils. "I have said all that I mean. I say it's shabby to freeze Jasper out in his absence; I say that you are free to use whatever share I may claim in the range as you like. But not for that. I won't be a party to it. I won't stand by and see you do such a wrong to yourself."

"Say what you mean," cried his father, with an implication in his voice which maddened Philip beyond control.

"Father!" he cried warningly.

Deed thrust his hands into his pockets, and, facing him with deliberate bitterness, looked into his eyes. "I will pay you every penny of your damned fifty thousand dollars before you are twenty-four hours older."

For a moment Philip stared at his father in speechless anger. Then with a cry of rage he burst from the room.

In leaving the hotel Philip came face to face with Margaret, whom he saw for the first time, and who was on her way to seek the man that had treated her so cruelly.

Since Deed's desertion of her on her wedding-day, Margaret had endured much suffering, both mental and physical, and had been administered to by her friends Mr. and Mrs. Ventner, with whom she was staying, and by Dr. Ernfield, who was deeply in love with her, although he realized the hopelessness of his suit.

Ernfield was a consumptive and a forced exile from his home in the East, where he had been doing brilliant work in

his profession until obliged to seek another climate in search of health.

Margaret was utterly unaware of Ernfield's feelings toward her, which he endeavored to hide as much as possible. On one occasion, however, during a horseback ride, Ernfield told Margaret of his love, and this declaration was such a shock to her that it made her long for Deed's protection.

She realized that her recreant lover could not return to her under the circumstances, and accordingly she decided that she would go to him. This was a tremendous decision for one of Margaret's retiring nature and New England traditions, but when the matter was once settled in her own mind she did not falter. She quietly packed her belongings and went to the man who needed her so sorely.

She found Deed plunged in misery as the result of the course he had taken, and crushed with sorrow at the thought that both sons were lost to him, and Margaret as well. Deed was overwhelmed by Margaret's generous behavior, and he and she were married immediately and went away at once, leaving their whereabouts unknown.

Before departing Deed had placed the $50,000 to Philip's credit in the bank, and in order to do this had drawn upon some trust funds that were in his keeping. He felt justified in doing this, as he planned to sell the Lady Bountiful mine to some men in Burro Peak City, who had offered him $60,000 for it. In order to reach these purchasers he must take a four days' horseback journey, as they were beyond the reach of railway or telegraph, so Deed's wedding-trip was taken in that direction.

After his father's departure Philip discovered what he had done, and immediately drew the money and deposited it to his father's account.

Jasper meanwhile had returned home, and was overcome with rage when he was informed by Snell, the new owner of the ranch, that the property was no longer his.

He immediately sought an interview with Philip, who was at work in his mine, and a stormy scene ensued, in the course of which Jasper exclaimed:

"You thought I wouldn't see through this thing—you and

father—did you? You must have taken me for a bat. Why, you'd see through it yourself—yes, even you, my helpless, pottering brother, who don't know as much of business in a year as I could guess before breakfast any morning. Yes! You who never turned an honest dollar in all your life, and who have managed to lose a pretty number, even you would see through it. I do see the point, and I won't be quieted. There's going to be a row about this thing before we're done with it, let me tell you."

"Do you find yourself safe in always judging other men by yourself?" asked Philip after a pause. "Do I look like a fellow who could stoop to your notions of what a man may let himself do? Was I ever a sneak?"

Jasper clenched his hands. "Yes," he cried hoarsely, "yes. When were you ever anything else? Your life has been one long slinking out of every sort of duty, responsibility, and hard work. Your father has fed you since you were a man; he has kept you in amusement and helped you in every fool scheme for dodging disagreeable things that your ingenuity could invent."

These hot words were soon followed by blows, and a fracas ensued in which Jasper was worsted and knocked unconscious by Philip.

Besides their financial difficulties, the brothers found themselves involved in an affair of the heart, as Dorothy Maurice, for whom Philip had conceived a deep attachment, proved to be an old flame of Jasper's, whom he still hoped to win in spite of her previous rejections of his suit.

At this crisis in Philip's affairs, he received a telegram telling him that ore had been discovered in his mine named the Little Cipher, and that consequently he was rich. This, instead of being joyful news to Philip, was quite the reverse, because of the two mines that he had been managing, the Little Cipher he had worked for Jasper and the other, named the Pay Ore, for himself. This fact was known only to Philip, however, and it was entirely a matter of conscience with him, as he had made the division in his own mind, and nobody else was aware of the arrangement.

He battled with his conscience, which told him to give to

his brother the mine which he had worked in his interest, while on the other hand he was tempted to take for himself what he had exclusively earned.

He went to see Dorothy, who wished to know the cause of the estrangement between himself and Jasper, and when he declined to tell her she declined to accede to his proposal of marriage. Philip had an interview with Mr. Maurice, who confessed that he was under an obligation to Jasper, of whom he had borrowed five thousand dollars, and who he feared would make things most unpleasant for him.

Philip, in his desire to serve Dorothy, yielded to temptation and decided to take possession of the Little Cipher mine; he told Mr. Maurice, who inclined toward a rich son-in-law, that he would give him the money with which to settle with Jasper.

Dorothy, learning of Jasper's perfidy toward his father and brother, found her heart turned completely against him and drawn toward Philip. These two soon came to an understanding, and an engagement followed. Philip was full of joy at having won Dorothy, the only damper to his happiness being the consciousness of his action regarding the mine, but he reassured himself on this point by the convincing argument that it was not wrong if done for Dorothy's sake.

During this time Deed's whereabouts had been unknown, but this mysterious absence, which was considered intentional by his friends, was due in reality to an accidental happening. He and Margaret had been snow-bound in a place named Mineral Springs, and had been completely shut off from travel or communication with the outer world. This enforced delay had fretted Deed greatly, as it had prevented his selling the mine and restoring the trust-fund that he had borrowed. Jasper discovered his father's whereabouts, managed to force a passage through the snow, and had an interview with him regarding his transactions.

Deed refused to capitulate in any way, and, though Jasper threatened to bring suit against him, he told him he would fight to the end. Jasper on his return trip was lost in the snow, and was finally rescued in the last stages of exhaustion. This experience was followed by a severe illness from which he barely recovered. He was visited professionally at their home

by Dr. Ernfield, who was prostrated by his exertions and finally succumbed to a severe attack of his fatal malady. He was carefully tended by Mrs. Ventner, and he received a visit from Margaret which caused him mingled pleasure and pain. He wished to be sure that Margaret was really happy with Deed, and when she convinced him that this was the case he was satisfied.

While these events were taking place, Dorothy and Philip had been reveling in their newly found happiness, from which, however, they soon had a rude awakening. While taking a horseback expedition together, to visit a neighboring mine, conversation drifted around to Philip's experience with the Little Cipher, and he, not wishing longer to withhold the truth from Dorothy, explained the situation to her. Dorothy was horrified. She pressed her cheeks rapidly and repeatedly with her handkerchief. When she looked at him again it was with streaming eyes. "Say you were not in your right mind, that you did it in error! Say anything rather than leave me to believe what I must! It wasn't you! Oh, Philip! Was not the man I have known you for, too proud? Would he not have seen how the very security with which he might take it, and keep silence, forced him to hold his hand? Oh, say you did not do it!"

"I can't! I can't!" he cried. "It's true!"

She gazed at him with eyes of unspeakable reproach; and he dropped the eyes he had fixed upon her while she spoke with the fascination of a criminal who hears his sentence. She checked her horse and held out her hand.

"Good-by, then."

"Good-by?" he exclaimed, stupefied.

"Did you think we could go on?" she asked sadly. "Did you think it could all be as it was? No; it is ended for us. Good-by," she repeated. The tears fell from her eyes in a rain, but there was no relenting in her face. "Give me my ring," she said dully.

He stared. "Dorothy," he burst out, "you can't! you won't!"

"I must."

"I have wronged Jasper. I confess it. Nothing that he has

done excuses it. It makes it worse. I own it. But I can right that. I will. Dorothy, surely this need not touch us."

"Oh, what do I care for Jasper?" she cried in misery. "It is for you I care, and you have lost yourself, to me, to all that has been. Oh, is it for me to show you such a thing? You have murdered our love. All the atonements in the world can't change that."

Philip tried to prevail upon Dorothy to change her decision, but at last, realizing that what she said was final, he tore the ring from his finger and left her, heart-broken.

Meanwhile his father had returned home and had learned, to his astonishment, of Philip's kindness and generosity to himself, which had saved his good name and proved how mistaken he was in regard to his son's character.

Deed at once heard of Philip's broken engagement and flight, and, feeling himself the cause of all this trouble, went immediately to Dorothy to intercede in his son's behalf. He told her of Philip's noble conduct toward himself and tried to make her overlook his fault, and at last Dorothy relented and professed her willingness to see him again.

Dorothy begged her father to take her away from Maverick, and he, feeling that his usefulness there was over, gladly acceded to her wish. They went to an adjacent town temporarily, and while there Dorothy was visited by Jasper, who had discovered her hiding-place.

He tried to persuade ner to listen again to his suit, and told her that since his illness he had become a changed man. He also said he was ready to make restitution to his brother and restore to him his share of the ranch, and Dorothy was quite impressed by his apparent goodness.

But when Jasper found that his protestations would not win the day, he changed his tactics and began to defame the character of his brother, who he realized was his rival. He finally let out the secret that Philip had borrowed five thousand dollars on the Little Cipher mine, with which to settle Mr. Maurice's debt to himself, and Dorothy was horror-stricken at the part her father had taken in the transaction. She ordered Jasper to leave her at once, and immediately had an interview with her father which changed her previous attitude toward

him to one akin to loathing, when she realized that he had been willing to barter her happiness for money.

Dorothy passed a sleepless night and went for an early morning walk to try to decide what she had better do, when she was greatly surprised to meet Philip, who had come in search of her.

Philip's discovery of Dorothy had been brought about by his father, who had gone in search of him in order to deliver personally the message that Dorothy was willing to see him again.

Deed's efforts were rewarded by the reconciliation of the lovers, and he had the satisfaction of feeling that he had partially repaid Philip for his goodness to him.

The marriage of Philip and Dorothy soon followed.

Deed decided to buy back the ranch and return it to Jasper on the original terms of partnership; and Philip sold his Pay Ore mine and paid back the money that he had borrowed on the credit of the Little Cipher.

Mr. Maurice left Colorado and returned to New York to be assistant rector in a fashionable parish, where it was hoped that his social gifts would atone for the absence of stronger qualities.

Portrait of Honoré de Balzac

Photogravure from the celebrated unfinished painting by L. Boulanger

him to one akin to loathing, when she realized that he had been willing to barter her happiness for money.

Dorothy passed a sleepless night and went for an early morning walk to try to decide what she had better do, when she was greatly surprised to meet Philip, who had come in search of her.

Philip's discovery of Dorothy had been brought about by his father, who had gone in search of him in order to deliver personally the message that Dorothy was willing to see him again.

Deed's efforts were rewarded by the reconciliation of the lovers, and he had the satisfaction of feeling that he had partially repaid Philip for his goodness to him.

The marriage of Philip and Dorothy soon followed.

Deed decided to buy back the ranch and return it to Jasper on the original terms of partnership; and Philip sold his Pay Ore mine and paid back the money that he had borrowed on the credit of the Little Cipher.

Mr. Maurice left Colorado and returned to New York to be assistant rector in a fashionable parish, where it was hoped that his social gifts would atone for the absence of stronger qualities.

Portrait of Honoré de Balzac

Photogravure from the celebrated unfinished painting by L. Boulanger

HONORÉ DE BALZAC

(France, 1799–1850)

THE CHOUANS (1829)

The "Chouans" were the French royalists of Maine and Brittany who revolted against the French conventions in 1792. *Chouan* signifies an owl, and may have been a nickname of Jean Cottereau, who led the insurgents, or perhaps the hoot of an owl was used to summon the men to their rendezvous. The romantic side of this movement was utilized by Balzac, and his plot was subsequently dramatized, Madame Modjeska, the Polish actress, enacting the *rôle* of the heroine. This novel was the first to be published under Balzac's name, with the title *Le Dernier Chouan* ("The Last Chouan").

TOWARD the end of September, 1799, a hundred or more conscripts, in charge of a detachment of a hundred and fifty soldiers, were slowly climbing the Pilgrim Hill, in Brittany, half-way between Fougères and Ernée, a little town used by travelers as a half-way house. Among them were a few townspeople, but the greater part were barefooted peasants, with no garments but a large goatskin, which covered them from neck to knee, and breeches of the coarsest white linen. The straight locks of their long hair falling on their shoulders mingled with the goatskin and so hid their faces that they might easily be confounded with the animals whose spoils served to clothe them. They were the contingent extracted with great difficulty from the district of Fougères to fill the levy ordered by the Directory of the French Republic. The Government had asked for a hundred millions of money and a hundred thousand men, to reënforce its armies, then in process of defeat by the Austrians in Italy, by the Prussians in Germany, and by Suwaroff and his Russians in Switzerland.

Brittany was divided at the time into two hostile camps, the adherents and the opponents of the Government. The lat-

ter, called in the Bas Breton dialect *Chouans* ("screech-owls"), from their peculiar cry of recognition, were made up chiefly of peasantry who, driven to rebellion by heavy taxes, by persecution of their religion, or by fear of being enrolled in the armies of the Republic, supported the royalist party, but often, under pretense of waging war for the King, infested the roads, pillaged villages, and committed all sorts of depredations. The Bretons were therefore strongly averse to military service, and the Commandant of the Blues, as the troops of the Republic were called, from their blue uniforms faced with red, was anxious to reach Alençon with his levies, so as to be in a more populous district. Before quitting Fougères, Commandant Hulot had secretly provided his soldiers with ammunition and with rations for the whole party; and he had resolved not to halt at Ernée, the usual resting-place, for fear that his contingent might open communication with the Chouans, who were doubtless spread over the neighboring country. In going up the hill the conscripts had lagged so in their march that they had put two hundred paces between them and their escort. When Commandant Hulot observed this, he cried, in a voice deepened by the hardships of war:

"Why the devil do they not come on?"

"You want to know why?" answered a voice.

The Commandant turned sharply around as if a sword-point had pricked him, and saw, two paces off, a figure odder than any of the others—a short, stoutly-built man with broad shoulders, a head nearly as large as a bull's, with blubber lips, flapping ears, and red hair, which made him seem akin rather to cattle than to mankind. His long hair fell on each side of his face and mingled with that of the shaggy goatskin, and his feet were hidden in huge wooden shoes. Instead of the knotty stick borne by the conscripts he carried a large whip, the plaited lash of which seemed twice the length of an ordinary whip-lash. Hulot, surprised at the man's arrival, scanned him from head to foot, and repeated in a mechanical fashion, "Yes; why do they not come on? do you know, man?"

"The reason," replied his sinister interlocutor, in an accent showing that he spoke French with difficulty, "the reason is,"

and he pointed with his huge rough hand to Ernée, "that there is Maine, and here Brittany ends."

Hulot looked at him with piercing eyes, and asked, "Whence come you?"

"From the country of the Gars."

"Your name?"

"Marche-à-Terre."

"Why do you use your Chouan name in spite of the law?"

But Marche-à-Terre stared with such an air of imbecility that the Commandant thought he had not understood him.

"Are you one of the Fougères contingent?"

"I don't know," replied the man, in a tone which arrests further inquiry in despair. He calmly seated himself by the roadside, drew from his smock some pieces of black buckwheat cake, and began to eat with a stolid nonchalance.

Hulot now noticed that the man's hair, smock, and goatskins were covered with thorns and scraps of leaves, as if he had made a long journey through dense thickets. He whispered to Gérard, his adjutant, "We came for wool, and we shall go home shorn."

"Are we then really in danger?" asked Gérard.

"Hist!" said the Commandant. "We are in the wolf's throat. Luckily, we hold the top of the ridge. Friends," he continued, speaking in low tones to Captain Merle and Adjutant Gérard, "I have private information of the mess we are in. Fouché has found out that Louis XVIII has sent here a man full of talent and vigor, a *ci-devant*, whose hope is to unite Vendéans and Chouans. The fellow has actually landed in Morbihan. He calls himself 'the Gars.' For all these cattle fit themselves with names that would give an honest patriot the stomach-ache if he bore them. Moreover, our man is about here; and the appearance of this Chouan shows me that he is upon us. But they don't teach tricks to an old monkey."

Hulot now sent scouts ahead to examine the woods on each side of the road, set two men to watch Marche-à-Terre, with orders to shoot him at any suspicious movement, and drew up his men in battle array. The conscripts were huddled together thirty paces in the rear, and ten paces back of them was a

squad of soldiers under Lieutenant Lebrun. Just then an owl hooted afar off. Hulot took his eyes off Marche-à-Terre for an instant. The Chouan whistled in a way to send the sound to a great distance, and before his watchers could take aim at him, he struck both down with his whip and disappeared in the thicket. As he ran his sabots dropped off, and all could see on his feet the hobnailed shoes worn by the "King's Huntsmen," as the royalists called themselves.

At the Chouans' signal the whole gathering of conscripts dashed into the wood like a flock of birds. At the same time cries or rather savage howls arose, and a heavy volley from the wood at the top of the slope laid low seven or eight soldiers. Hulot sent two detachments, under Gérard and Merle, to take the Chouans on the flanks. Three hundred of the enemy debouched from the wood and formed in a disorderly way across the road in front of the Blues, and would probably have succeeded in surrounding the little company if the wings had not raked their rear with several volleys, which almost equalized their numbers. The Blues then dashed on them with the bayonet, and both sides gave themselves up to the furious zeal which made this war unique, each in silence broken only by the clash of arms and the crunching of the gravel.

Hulot soon distinguished among the Chouans a man who, surrounded by a few picked followers, seemed to be their leader. Beside him stood Marche-à-Terre, whose rifle was always active, repeating his orders in a harsh tone. The young leader, slender and well proportioned, seemed to Hulot to be not more than twenty-five years old. He wore a green cloth shooting-coat, and the Commandant thought he saw on his half-opened waistcoat a broad red ribbon. Of his features, he could distinguish only sparkling eyes, fair hair, and a finely cut profile. His bearing was marked at once by elegance and strength, making him a pleasing type of the French *noblesse*, in strong contrast with the Republican leader.

Victory might have remained undecided for hours, if the sound of a drum had not announced the coming of the National Guard of Fougères, for which Hulot had despatched a messenger. On hearing the approach of reënforcements for the Blues, the Chouans sullenly fell back, fighting every inch of ground, and

finally disappeared over the ridge as the men of Fougères came on a run to the battle-field.

Some time after this engagement, Commandant Hulot received orders to escort the mail-coach containing two ladies from Mayenne to Mortagne. As the Chouans were about the latter place, he took two companies and his trusty officers, Merle and Gérard.

"May they make a noble of me," he exclaimed, "if I understand a word of my despatches. But I dare say I am only a fool. Don't these Paris dandies request us to show the greatest respect to their d——d females? Look at the First Consul: there's a man for you; no women about him, always attending to his business."

One company of the escort preceded the coach and one followed it. The two travelers were Mademoiselle de Verneuil and her maid Francine. They were apparently accompanied by Monsieur Corentin, a thin, dried-up little man, who rode sometimes before and sometimes behind the carriage, but no one ever saw him address the ladies. His costume, in the fashion which called forth the caricatures of the Incroyables, roused Hulot's ire and caused some uncomplimentary remarks to his officers.

At Alençon the coach stopped at the Three Moors, an inn in the High Street, for breakfast.

As the travelers were evidently of importance, and time was precious, the innkeeper suggested that they should join a party, the Citizen du Gua Saint-Cyr and his mother, Madame du Gua, who had breakfast ready to be served in a private room upstairs. As he made this suggestion, a short, thick-set man came noiselessly in, touched the innkeeper with his whip, and whispered in his ear: "You know what any imprudence or any tale-bearing means?" With this he made a gesture which caused the landlord to turn pale. Francine, the lady's maid, thought she recognized the speaker, and, to make sure, ran to a window and watched him as he went to the stable. From his walk and gestures she knew him to be the Chouan called Marche-à-Terre. Her curiosity was excited, but she determined to keep her discovery to herself and watch events.

Just then a young man, who stood on the staircase and had seen the travelers come in, said, looking at Mademoiselle de Verneuil, "If it is this young citizeness that you mean to give us as a guest, in my mother's absence I accept."

The speaker wore the blue coat and black gaiters of the students of the Ecole Polytechnique, but Mademoiselle de Verneuil distinguished at a glance under this sober costume an elegant form and the marks of native nobility. She bent her head gracefully, smiled coquettishly, and darted one of those velvet glances which would rekindle a heart dead to love, with her long lashes drooping over her almond-shaped black eyes, and said in her most melodious tones, "We are very much obliged to you, sir." She and Francine then disappeared up the stairs, leaving the young man to settle with himself whether her reply implied acceptance or refusal.

"Who is the woman?" he asked of the host.

"'Tis the Citizeness Verneuil," replied Corentin, in a sour tone, scanning the young man jealously, "and she is a *ci-devant.* What do you want with her?"

The student, who was humming a Republican song, lifted his head haughtily. The two glared at each other, and the glance was the seed of a mutual and eternal hatred.

"That fellow," whispered the young man to the hostess, "is a spy of Fouché's. *Police* is written on his face." Then, to a lady who entered the room, "Dear mamma, I have mustered some guests in your absence."

"Guests!" she exclaimed; "what madness!"

"'Tis Mademoiselle de Verneuil," he replied, in a low tone.

"She perished on the scaffold after the affair at Savenay," said his mother sharply.

"You mistake, Madame," said Corentin gently, "there are two Demoiselles de Verneuil."

Corentin, who had been privately studying her, saw a lady with a dazzling skin and luxuriant black hair, with a face that showed mental power, but he did not believe that she could be the mother of the young man. He noted too that her mantle was of English stuff, and that the shape of her bonnet was foreign.

"If she is his mother," thought he, "then I am the Pope! I have got hold of some Chouans; let us make sure of what their quality is."

At the breakfast, which passed off pleasantly, though each endeavored in vain to find out the other's political preferences, Mademoiselle de Verneuil, learning that the destination of the

strangers was the same as her own, invited them to share her coach and escort. While they were discussing this, Commandant Hulot entered and stood agape at the sailor, whom he considered with extraordinary attention.

"What's the matter, Commandant? Do you happen to know me?" asked the young man.

"Perhaps so," answered the Republican. "What is your family name?"

"Du Gua Saint-Cyr."

"And have you got papers?"

"Perhaps you want to read them?" said the sailor in an impertinent tone.

"Does a young monkey like you think to make a fool of me?" exclaimed Hulot angrily. "Your papers, or off with you!"

"Who are you?"

"The Commandant of the department. Come, your papers!"

Just as the measured tread of soldiers was heard in the street, the young man offered some papers, which Hulot read slowly. During the reading an owl's hoot was heard. The Commandant, handing back the papers, said: "That is all very well, but you must come with me to the district office."

"Why do you take him there?" asked Mademoiselle de Verneuil.

"Young woman," replied Hulot, "that is no business of yours."

Mademoiselle de Verneuil's face flushed and her eyes sparkled. "Tell me," she asked, "has this young man complied with the law's demands?"

"Yes, in appearance," said Hulot ironically.

"Then, you will be good enough to let him alone *in appearance*," said she. "What do you mean to do with him?"

"Nothing but cool his head with a little lead," said the Commandant ironically. "Come, my fine fellow, come along!"

"Do not stir," said the girl to the young man, with a dignified gesture. Then from her bodice she drew a letter and handed it to Hulot.

"Read that," she said, with a sneer.

Hulot read with stupefaction a letter bearing the ministerial countersign, commanding all authorities to obey the bearer.

Then he drew his sword, broke it across his knee, and threw down the fragments.

"Mademoiselle," said he, "I am not good at obeying where pretty girls command. My resignation shall be sent to the First Consul to-night."

"Colonel," said the fair Parisian, "though your beard is rather long, you may kiss this, for you are a man."

"I hope so, Mademoiselle," said he, depositing clumsily a kiss on her hand. "As for you, my fine fellow, you have had a nice escape."

"For whom did you take my son?" asked Madame du Gua.

"For the Gars, the chief sent to the Chouans and the Vendéans by the London Cabinet—the Marquis de Montauran."

The Commandant abruptly left the room, but Mademoiselle de Verneuil followed, stopped him in the passage, and asked gravely:

"Have you really strong reasons for suspecting this man of being the Gars?"

"God's thunder! Mademoiselle, the fellow who travels with you told me that the travelers Du Gua Saint-Cyr had been assassinated by the Chouans."

"Oh! if Corentin is at the bottom of it," said she, with a contemptuous gesture, "I am surprised at nothing."

As soon as Mademoiselle de Verneuil had left the room, Madame du Gua said to her companion: "Women will certainly be your ruin. Why did you allow her to breakfast with us? She is one of the loose women by whose aid Fouché hopes to seize you, and the letter she showed was given to her in order to command the services of the Blues against yourself."

The result of the foregoing was that the young man, who really was the Gars, and Mademoiselle de Verneuil, who was employed by the Government to entrap him, fell mutually in love. They all traveled together on the way to Fougères, but night fell before they reached their destination, and, at the invitation of him who called himself Du Gua Saint-Cyr, who gave his word of honor for the safety of all, including the Republican guard, they stopped for the night at the Château de la Vivetière.

To Mademoiselle de Verneuil's astonishment, she found

herself, at supper, among a large number of Chouan and Vendéan chiefs, met here at an important conference. The Marquis explained to them that he was indebted for his life to the young lady, and that she and her escort were present on his parole, and must be received as friends. Notwithstanding this, Madame du Gua recalled to them that, although their friends in Paris had warned them of just such a snare, Montauran had fallen in love with the girl who, she believed, had stolen a great name in order to disgrace it, and that he appeared to be ready to sacrifice all their interests to satisfy his own love of pleasure. In consequence of her machinations, the entire escort of Blues, numbering sixty-five men, were surrounded in the courtyard by Marche-à-Terre and his men, and butchered, with their officers, Merle and Gérard. At the sound of the firing, everyone rose from the table save Madame du Gua.

"Do not be alarmed," said she; "'tis nothing. Our folks are only killing the Blues!" But as soon as she saw that the Marquis had left the room, she arose and dashed at Mademoiselle de Verneuil like a flash of lightning. "This young lady here," she cried, "came to carry off the Gars from us. She came to try to give him up to the Republic." She tore open her dress and snatched from her bosom a paper. "Here," she cried, "is an order, signed Laplace, and countersigned Dubois. And this is its tenor: '*Citizen commandants of the forces of all ranks, district administrators, procurators, syndics, and so forth, in the revolted departments, and especially those of the places where the ci-devant Marquis de Montauran, brigand-chief, surnamed the Gars, may be found, are to afford succor and help to the Citizeness Marie Verneuil, and to obey any orders which she may give them, each in such matters as concern him, etc., etc.*'"

"To think of an opera-girl taking an illustrious name to soil it with such infamy!" she added.

Then, not perceiving that the Marquis had come in, she said to a Chouan: "Take her away, Pille Miche; she is my share of the spoil, and I give her to you. Do with her whatever you like."

Mademoiselle de Verneuil, her eyes flashing fire, darted to the door, where the Marquis was standing. With a glance of half-irrational hatred, she seized Merle's sword, which had

been left there, and drove it on him up to the hilt. But the blade passed between his arm and his side; the Gars caught her by the waist and, aided by Pille Miche, dragged her from the room. At this, Francine, uttering piercing cries, followed her mistress, shrieking "Pierre! Pierre!"

When they led her into the yard and she saw the corpses of the Blues stretched on the straw, she cried with a shudder, "The faith of a gentleman! ha! ha! ha! A happy day!"

"Yes, a happy one," answered the Marquis, "and one without a morrow."

He turned bruskly away, leaving Pille Miche his victim.

"Marquis!" she said, "God will hear me, and I shall pray Him to give you a happy day without a morrow!"

Madame du Gua did not have her revenge. Francine, whose lover Pierre was the Chouan called Marche-à-Terre, persuaded Pille Miche to sell her mistress, and the two women were hurried into the coach and driven at headlong speed to Fougères. When Commandant Hulot came to her the next day to demand account of his soldiers, she said: "I shall avenge them. I will lure this young noble into my embraces, and he shall quit them only to take his death journey. The wretch has pronounced his own sentence, 'A day without a morrow!' "

To secure this end she went again among the Chouans and attended a ball given by the chiefs at their headquarters at St. James, a little town in Brittany named by the English in the fourteenth century. She made her peace with the Marquis, who, again infatuated with her, accompanied her back until in sight of Fougères.

They afterward met by stealth at places near the town, and once the Marquis was nearly caught by Hulot and his Blues. At last he offered her his hand and name and promised to risk everything to secure her love.

"The day after to-morrow, if in the morning you see smoke on the rocks of Saint-Sulpice, that evening I shall be at your house as lover, as husband, whichever you will. I shall have put all to the touch!"

"Then, Alphonse, you really love me," she cried with transport, "that you risk your life thus before you give it to me?"

He answered not, but looked at her. Her eyes fell; but he read on the passionate countenance of his mistress a madness equal to his own, and he held out his arms to her.

On the evening of the day set, the Marquis de Montauran, accompanied by a priest, and by two witnesses, the Count de Bauvan and the Baron du Guénic, appeared at the house of Mademoiselle de Verneuil in Fougères. At the end of the salon an altar had been improvised, and the white-haired priest was arrayed in his sacerdotal garments.

"Leave me alone with the priest," said Mademoiselle de Verneuil.

When the gentlemen had withdrawn, she said: "Father, in my childhood, an old man frequently repeated to me that, with a lively faith, man can obtain everything from God. Is this true?"

"It is true," answered the priest. "Everything is possible to Him who has created everything."

Mademoiselle de Verneuil threw herself on her knees with wonderful enthusiasm. "O God!" said she in her ecstasy, "my faith in Thee is equal to my love for him! Inspire me now: let a miracle be done, or take my life!"

"Your prayer will be heard," said the priest.

And it was answered. Before morning, both their forms, shot to death by Hulot's Blues, lay side by side on a camp-bed in the guard-house.

The dying girl, recognizing her husband, murmured in an almost stifled voice:

"A Day without a Morrow. God has heard my prayer too well!"

THE MAGIC SKIN (1831)

(*La Peau de Chagrin*)

This is one of the best known of Balzac's novels. He worked very hard over it, and his hopes of its success were realized. It was asserted that Ernst T. W. Hoffman, the German novelist, was his model, but Balzac denied it. Before it appeared in two volumes, in 1831, a few fragments were published in periodicals. It was also included in the three volumes entitled *Romans et Contes Philosophiques*. In 1835 it was classed with the *Etudes Philosophiques*. Some critics have compared it to *Faust* and *Hamlet*. Perhaps Balzac speaks for himself through the old merchant, who says to Raphael: "I will tell you in a few words the secret of human life. By two instinctive processes, man exhausts the springs of life within him. Two verbs cover all the forms which these two causes of death may take—To Will and To have your Will. Between these two limits of human activity the wise have discovered an intermediate formula, to which I owe my good fortune and long life. To Will consumes us, and To have our Will destroys us, but To Know steeps our feeble organisms in perpetual calm." He tells us that *The Magic Skin* to some extent forms a link between the Philosophical Studies and Studies of Manners, by a work of almost Oriental fancy, in which life itself is shown in a mortal struggle with the very element of all passion. Rastignac and Bianchon are frequently met with in other novels; they appear first after this story in *Père Goriot*.

N October, 1829, a young man entered the Palais Royal, just as the gaming-houses opened. He ascended the stairs of gambling-hell number thirty-six, and walked into the salon where the rattle of coin brought his senses under the spell of greed. Several gamblers were there, hovering over the green table; the croupier and the banker were crying, "Make your play!" The young man, who appeared to be about twenty-five, threw a piece of gold upon the table. It rolled upon the black. A young Italian, with sudden enthusiasm, punted his heap against the stranger's gold. "Even! Red wins!" cried the croupier. As the banker showered the notes upon the Italian, the stranger turned pale and left the room. He went down the steps, feebly whistling *Di tanti Palpiti*, walked into the Rue Saint Honoré, crossed the gardens of the Tuileries, and

thought of suicide. He bent his way toward the Pont Royal, reached the middle of the arch, leaned over the parapet and looked forebodingly at the cold and dirty Seine. Death in broad daylight seemed degrading; he would wait until night. Strolling along, he came across the shop of a dealer in antiques, and thought to wile away the time in looking at the curiosities. The young shopkeeper gave him permission to wander about. It was indeed a marvelous collection: four galleries full of works of art and curios of all periods and countries. A mahogany coffer, hanging from a nail by a silver chain, attracted his attention.

"What is in it?" he asked the shopman, who replied that he would have to fetch his master.

In the meantime, the young man sank into a reverie, from which he was aroused by a startling apparition. A little, old man, thin, with long white hair and gray, pointed beard, clad in a black velvet robe, girded with a silk cord, and a black velvet skull-cap, stood before him holding aloft a lamp.

"You wish to see Raphael's picture of Jesus Christ, Monsieur?" the old man asked, and as he pushed aside a spring the painting was revealed. After the young man had admired the picture, he exclaimed:

"And now for death!"

The merchant thought he intended to murder him, and the stranger had to explain his intention of committing suicide. The old man offered to make him rich and powerful.

"Look," he said, holding the lamp so as to cast light on the wall, "look at that leather skin!"

The young man rose abruptly, and showed some surprise at the sight of a piece of shagreen which hung on the wall behind his chair. It was only about the size of a fox's skin, but it seemed to fill the deep shadows of the place with such brilliant rays that it looked like a small comet, an appearance at first sight inexplicable. The young skeptic went up to this so-called talisman, which was to rescue him from his woes, with a scoffing phrase in his thoughts. Still, a harmless curiosity led him to bend over it and look at it from all points of view, and he soon learned the cause of its singular brilliance. The dark grain of the leather had been so carefully burnished and

polished, the striped markings of the graining were so sharp and clear, that every particle of the surface of the bit of Oriental leather concentrated the light and reflected it vividly.

"Ah!" he cried, "here is the mark of the seal which in the East they call Solomon's Signet!"

The old man held the lamp close to the talisman and pointed out some inlaid characters. The mysterious words were Sanskrit, and read as follows:

Possessing me, thou shalt possess all things.
But thy life is mine, for God has so willed it.
Wish, and thy wishes shall be fulfilled;
But measure thy desires, according
To the life that is in thee.
This is thy life,
With each wish I must shrink
Even as thy own days.
Wilt thou have me? Take me.
God will hearken unto thee.
So be it!

"I have offered this talisman with its terrible powers to many men," the merchant continued, "but no one was willing to conclude the fateful contract proposed by an unknown force."

The stranger clutched the talisman.

"Let me see now," he exclaimed: "I wish for a royal banquet, a carouse worthy of this century, which, it is said, has brought everything to perfection. Let me have young boon companions, witty, unwarped by prejudice, merry to the verge of madness! Let one wine succeed another, each more biting and perfumed than the last and strong enough to bring about three days of delirium! Passionate women's forms should grace that night! I would be borne away to unknown regions beyond the confines of this world by the car and four-winged steed of a frantic and uproarious orgy. Next, I bid this enigmatical power to concentrate all delights for me in one single joy. Yes, I must comprehend every pleasure of earth and heaven in the final embrace that is to kill me!"

The merchant, laughing ironically, said:

"Your wishes will be accurately fulfilled, but at the expense of your life. The compass of your days visible in that skin will contract according to the strength and number of your desires,

from the least to the most extravagant. The Brahman from whom I had this skin explained to me that it would bring about a mysterious connection between the fortunes and wishes of its possessor. After all, you were wishing to die; very well, your suicide is only postponed!"

The young man, not noticing how flexible the skin had become, thrust it into his coat-pocket and abruptly left. As he rushed into the street, he ran into three young men.

"Why, it is Raphael!" they exclaimed.

They had been hunting for him several days; a new newspaper had just been established and large salaries and a merry life for the young journalists and critics were to be had. Arm in arm, with Raphael in their midst, they crossed the Pont des Arts and reached a mansion in the Rue Joubert. A great banquet was to take place. In a gorgeously furnished room, splendid with color and sweet with scent of blooming flowers, a long table was set with gleaming silver and brilliant crystal. Wonderful viands and rare wines succeeded one another, and the conversation of the wits was "merry to the verge of madness." Raphael's wish had been realized.

When he repaired to the drawing-room, another request was obeyed: beautiful women were there to charm the revelers. The scene became a saturnalia; the rooms were like a foretaste of Milton's Pandemonium; "the frantic and uproarious orgy" that Raphael had desired was enacted.

Raphael then told his friend Emile the history of his life: his father's strict discipline; his early pleasures; his loss of fortune; his social experiences; his lodging at Madame Gaudin's, where her daughter Pauline so tenderly cared for him; and his acquaintance with Rastignac, who introduced him to the beautiful Countess Fœdora. It was particularly of her that he talked, of "this woman without a heart," who scorned his love. He also told Emile how he left the Gaudins, and plunged into a vortex of pleasures, in which gaming played an important part, but only in private houses. He never had been in a gambling-house until he reached his last twenty-franc piece. Then, remembering Rastignac's luck, this reminded him of the talisman. He pulled it out of his pocket.

"The devil take death!" he cried wildly, brandishing the

skin. "I mean to live! I am rich! Nothing can withstand me!"

Half mad, he explained the virtues of the talisman to Emile, and they retired to the dining-room and measured it on a napkin, tracing its outline carefully. "I wish for an income of two thousand livres," said Raphael. "When that comes, you will observe a mighty shrinkage in my shagreen."

At noon, a notary called to inquire for Raphael. He had inherited a large fortune from his mother's brother. Raphael spread the talisman upon the napkin, and saw that it did not quite reach the outline he had traced. His face took on a ghastly hue; he was terrified; he was facing Death! Did not his mother die of consumption? "Like a traveler in the middle of a desert, with but a little water to quench his thirst, he must measure his life by the draughts he took of it."

In December, an old man peered at every door in the Rue de Varenne, searching for the house of the Marquis Raphael de Valentin. He had difficulty in effecting an entrance. Jonathan, an old servant, described to the old gentleman, when he told him he was Monsieur Porriquet, Raphael's old tutor, how strangely his master lived. The house was luxuriously furnished; but there was no life within. Raphael lived in solitude, vegetating, and Jonathan had to treat him as if he "were a baby in long clothes," thinking of all his needs, anticipating his every desire. Raphael did not desire to *wish.*

M. Porriquet was admitted, and found Raphael in his dressing-gown, reading the paper. He was pale, languid, and melancholy. In this room hung the Magic Skin, "fastened upon a background of white surrounded by a red line. Since that carouse, Raphael had stifled the least wish, and had lived so as not to cause the slightest shrinkage in the terrible talisman. The Magic Skin was like a tiger with which he must live without exciting its ferocity."

The old tutor had come to entreat Raphael's influence in securing employment. The latter said thoughtlessly, "I wish you may succeed"; and then suddenly gave a terrible cry, as he noticed a tiny space come between the skin and the red line.

At the opera, that night, Raphael saw the old merchant in the guise of an antiquated coxcomb. He laughed at Raphael

in derision. The unhappy man also saw the Countess Fœdora and others; but he had vowed to pay no special heed to any woman, and he used an opera-glass that distorted everything on which it was turned. Close beside him sat a lovely woman in a charming costume, who insisted on attracting his attention.

"Pauline!" he said to her at last.

"Monsieur Raphael!"

She asked him to come to his old lodging. He agreed; and when he got there he learned that Madame Gaudin had become a wealthy baroness. Pauline met him here for the sake of old associations and sentiment. Raphael now discovered that he loved Pauline, and that she had always loved him and made many sacrifices for him in her days of poverty.

"You shall be my wife," said Raphael. "A new life seems to begin for me. The cruel past and my wretched follies are hardly more to me than evil dreams. At your side, I breathe an atmosphere of happiness and I am pure. Be with me always," he added, pressing her solemnly to his beating heart.

"Death may come when it will," said Pauline in ecstasy; "I have lived!"

Pauline's carriage first took them to Raphael's house, where she agreed to marry him within a fortnight, and then to her father's home in the Rue Saint-Lazare. When Valentin returned home, "with as much happiness in his heart as mortal man can know," he looked at the Magic Skin; it had shrunk a little!

"Good God!" he cried, "every wish! Every desire of mine! Poor Pauline!"

He measured the shrinkage.

"I have hardly enough for two months!" A cold perspiration broke out. He seized the talisman in a burst of rage, ran down-stairs, and threw it into a well.

"The devil take this nonsense!"

So Raphael gave himself up to the happiness of loving and being beloved by Pauline.

The marriage was postponed till March. One morning in February, while Pauline was breakfasting with Raphael, the gardener begged permission to enter and handed his master a curiosity that he had found—a piece of leather, six inches

square! It was the inexorable talisman! Raphael's alarm terrified Pauline. She left him in tears, and he went to consult the learned. The various men of science that he called upon examined the piece of leather and had various theories; they could not stretch it, however. Raphael returned home and replaced the Magic Skin in its old frame, drawing a new line in red ink around it. To his surprise, Pauline returned. She remained all night, and was terrified by his ominous cough and more ominous words. A few days later, four physicians stood around Raphael, feeling his pulse and plying him with questions. His last hope lay in this consultation. This court of appeal was about to pronounce its decision—life or death. Valentin had summoned the oracles of modern medicine, so that he might have the last word of science. Valentin's observation could discover no trace of a feeling for his troubles in any of the three doctors—Brisset, Maugrédie, and Caméristus; but Bianchon's face showed grave compassion. He had been a doctor for too short a time to be untouched by suffering and unmoved by a death-bed.

The four doctors went into Raphael's study to discuss the case and reach the verdict.

A trip to Savoy was advised, and a month later Raphael was at Aix. Here he met the usual collection of invalids and pleasure-seekers drinking the waters, selfish and callous to one another's comfort. The resident physician gave him great encouragement. Several young men, taking a dislike to him, picked a quarrel; and as Raphael would not heed an old gentlewoman's warning, he fell into the trap and had to fight a duel. He was accompanied to the field by the faithful Jonathan. Raphael begged his antagonist to apologize, telling him that he possessed a terrible power, but did not wish to use it, for the use of it cost too dear. The man refused, and Raphael's ball went straight to his heart. Raphael did not heed the fallen man; he hurriedly pulled out the Magic Skin to see what the man's life had cost him. The talisman was the size of a small oak-leaf!

Raphael now went to Auvergne. Power leaves us just as it finds us; only great natures grow greater by its means. Raphael had had everything in his power, and he had done

nothing. After a brief stay in a peasant's cottage, trying to regain health, Raphael returned to Paris.

"Go and find Bianchon," he said to Jonathan.

Dr. Bianchon told Jonathan that Raphael's mind should be diverted; and at Raphael's request gave him an opiate. Jonathan diverted him. The servant one day conducted his master into the great gallery. Here was a banquet; here were beautiful women; here were voices and perfume and music. Raphael uttered a cry, and struck his old servant in the face. It was midnight. Raphael rushed to his room and took his opiate. In his deep sleep, youth seemed to return. He dreamed of Pauline; and, waking, found her beside him.

"Go! go!" he muttered; "if you stay I shall die!"

From his pillow, he drew a small bit of leather, tiny as a periwinkle petal.

"Pauline," he said, showing it to her, "let us say farewell! This talisman grants all my wishes and represents my span of life. If you look at me any longer, I shall die!" She took it in her hand. No longer able to control his thoughts, he called to her in love and longing, and the leather contracted in her hand. Pauline fled from him into the next room, locked the door and tried to strangle herself. The dying man rushed after her, and attempted to embrace her. Jonathan appeared, terrified, and ran to tear away the dead body from Pauline's grasp.

"He is mine. I have killed him," she said; "did I not foresee what would happen?"

"And what became of Pauline?"

"Pauline. Ah! Pauline is the queen of illusions, radiant as an angel, flower of the flame, sparkle of the diamond—sylph, naiad, siren, the child of sun and river, air and cloud."

"How about Fœdora?"

"Oh, Fœdora! You are sure to meet her. She will go to the opera this evening, and if you like to take it so, she is Society!"

A WOMAN OF THIRTY (1832)

(*Une Femme de Trente Ans*)

This work is composed of six separate stories: I. *Early Mistakes;* II. *Hidden Griefs;* III. *At Thirty Years;* IV. *The Finger of God;* V. *Two Meetings;* and VI. *The Old Age of a Guilty Mother.* At first, the names of the characters were different in these disconnected tales, which appeared in various periodicals at various times. In 1842, Balzac changed the names of the individuals, so that all the adventures should be given to the same set of characters. One heroine, Julie d'Aiglemont, links the stories. In 1834, Balzac told Madame Hanska that *Souffrances Inconnues* ("Hidden Griefs"), the second story of this group, cost him four months of work. He dated this novel 1828–1844. It belongs to the *Scènes de la Vie Privée* of the *Comédie Humaine.*

EARLY MISTAKES

ONE Sunday morning, early in April, 1813, a luxurious cabriolet, drawn by two spirited horses, stopped in the Rue de Rivoli and a prematurely aged duke assisted his youthful daughter Julie to alight. Before setting out upon the disastrous campaign in which Napoleon was to lose first Bessières and then Duroc, afterward winning the battles of Lutzen and Bautzen, only to see himself deserted by Austria, Saxony, Bavaria, and Bernadotte, and meeting defeat on the sanguinary field of Leipsic, he was holding a brilliant review of the flower of his troops in the courtyard of the Tuileries. Though they were somewhat late in arriving, an advantageous position for seeing the review was secured for the Duke and his daughter by the Count d'Aiglemont, a young and dashing colonel of cavalry. Julie's manifest interest in the latter betrayed to her father the secret of her love. The latter warned her against a man who was a spendthrift and without ability, who was created to eat and digest four meals a day, to sleep, to fall in love with the first woman at hand, and to fight. He said: "You are still too young, too fragile, too delicate for the cares and

rubs of married life. D'Aiglemont's relatives have spoiled him just as your mother and I have spoiled you. What hope is there that you two could agree, with two imperious wills diametrically opposed? You will be either the tyrant or the victim, and either alternative means for a wife an equal sum of misfortune."

Nearly a year later, a *calèche* was rolling along the high-road from Amboise to Tours. During a halt to repair some slight mishap to the harness, Colonel d'Aiglemont woke his wife, Julie, to admire the fine view of the Loire. She complied with supreme indifference. Evidently she had had her way with her father, to her misfortune. An English aristocrat, who, with all the other English in France, was detained by Napoleon by way of reprisals for the violation of the Treaty of Amiens, was passing at the moment and was struck by the beauty of the youthful bride. When the carriage proceeded, he had the temerity to turn his horse and follow. On reaching Tours, Colonel d'Aiglemont left his wife in the care of his aunt, the Marquise de Listomère-Landon. He was on his way to the South with despatches for Soult from the Emperor. The old Marquise took a fancy to the young wife, and saw that Julie was not happy. She discovered that the girl was disenchanted and that the full extent of Victor's emptiness had been revealed.

The persistent Englishman attracted attention by passing the house every day, trying to catch a glimpse of Julie.

Victor sent his wife news of the downfall of the Empire and the capitulation of Paris. He had gone over to the Bourbons, and begged her to join him at Orléans, sending an old soldier as escort. All the way she heard the wheels of a carriage following hers; and at Blois she found that the occupant was the Englishman, Arthur Grenville. At Orléans she was stopped and put under guard by the Prussians. After two hours, however, she received a passport, with apologies from the General, in whose company was Arthur Grenville, now wearing a British uniform.

Julie reached Paris without further adventure, and found that her husband had become a general; but she soon suffered irreparable loss in the death of her good friend the Marquise.

After the Hundred Days, Victor was appointed lieutenant-general, and for the second time became a marquis; but his ambition was to become a peer of France. At court, thanks to his purely external qualifications, he was in favor and accepted at his own valuation. At home, however, he was more modest: he felt that his young wife was his superior, and out of this respect grew an influence which Julie was unwillingly forced to wield. She became her husband's adviser, the director of his actions and fortunes. Her instinct told her that it was far better to obey a man of talent than to lead a fool. However, she suffered much in silence. Physical weakness condemned her to the sofa, as a rule; but, occasionally she went into society, where her fragile beauty and magnificent voice always attracted attention.

In 1817 a daughter was born, and for two years maternal cares made life less hard; but she and her husband necessarily lived apart, and in 1819 she found that as an object of interest she had passed out of his life. One evening, in 1820, the Marquis asked her to attend a concert at Madame de Sérizy's. Julie consented, and triumphed over all the other beautiful and fashionable women in the Countess' own salon. There she saw Lord Grenville again. To the compliments of his friends, the Marquis complained bitterly of his wife's ill-health, and the Englishman, who had studied medicine, offered to cure her. A few days later the offer was accepted. Madame d'Aiglemont welcomed the hope of a speedy cure, and no longer opposed her husband, who pressed her to accept the young doctor's offer. Yet she declined to trust herself with Lord Grenville, knowing that he cherished for herself a tender interest, until after some further study; but at least she felt certain that he had sufficient generosity to bear his enforced aloofness from her in silence.

One evening in August, 1821, the two were climbing the paths in the crags above the Château of Montcontour, near which they had first met seven years before. Julie was now a new creature: her face glowed with health; she was radiant with smiles and she felt the joy of living. After gazing at the lovely view of the Loire, Julie told Arthur that all the pleasure she had she owed to him: he had restored to her more than

health. She recognized the delicacy of his conduct, but it was out of her power to make any response. In return for his devotion, she required only a sacrifice of him: he must leave France. She was likely to die young and to know no happiness; but, with loathing in her voice, she added: "Henceforth I belong to *him* no longer."

During the drive to Blois, the General, who had freshly fallen in love with his wife, whose youth and beauty had been restored, pressed to her side like a lover. She repelled his advances, saying: "Have you not, as it is, found consolations which duty and the honor of both and (stronger still) which Nature forbids to me? Stay," she added, "you carelessly left three letters from Madame de Sérizy in a drawer; here they are. My silence about this matter should make it plain to you that in me you have a wife who has plenty of indulgence and does not exact from you the sacrifices prescribed by the law. But I have thought enough to see that the *rôles* of husband and wife are quite different, and that the wife alone is predestined to misfortune."

Two years later, the General and Madame d'Aiglemont, who had gone their separate ways, meeting more frequently abroad in society than at home, chanced to dine with a friend. The General announced his intention of going boar-hunting for a few days. He had hardly departed when Lord Grenville called. They had not met since the farewell at the Loire. In utter desperation, he had called to see Julie for the last time, and the accidental dropping of a pistol from his pocket showed his intentions. Julie was deaf to his entreaties, in the midst of which the General suddenly returned. In her embarrassment, she shut Arthur into her dressing-room. The General, however, was not suspicious. A few days later, he asked a friend to accompany him to attend Lord Grenville's funeral. The friend asked: "Is it really known how he came by his death?"

"His man says that he spent a whole night sitting on somebody's window-sill to save one woman's character, and it has been infernally cold lately."

"Such devotion would be highly creditable to one of us old stagers; but Lord Grenville was a youngster, and—an Eng-

lishman. Englishmen never could do anything like anybody else."

"Pooh!" returned D'Aiglemont, "these heroic exploits all depend upon the woman in the case, and it certainly was not for one that I know that poor Arthur came by his death."

HIDDEN GRIEFS

The Marquis was a great gambler. His lordship, the papers said, was in Spain with the Duc d'Angoulême, and beyond a doubt her ladyship had come to the lonely Château of Saint-Lange, on the skirts of Fontainebleau, to retrench after a run of ill-luck—so ran the local gossip. She lived in seclusion with her little daughter, between whom and herself was an ever-growing antipathy. Hélène was the offspring of a union abhorred by her mother. The man the Marquise had really loved had been young and generous; in obedience to the laws of the world, she had refused herself to his love and he had died "to save a woman's honor." To whom could she speak of her misery? Her tears would be an offense against her husband, the origin of the tragedy. By all laws, written and unwritten, she was bound to silence. A woman would have enjoyed the story; a man would have schemed for his own benefit.

Such grief as hers can weep freely only in solitude and loneliness: she must die, or kill something within her—perhaps her own conscience.

The village *curé* was persistent in calling upon the recluse to offer the consolations of religion, and at length succeeded in obtaining an interview. To him, finally, she bared her heart. She told him: "My poor little Hélène is her father's child, the offspring of duty and of chance. In me she finds nothing but the affection of instinct, the woman's natural compassion for the child of her womb. Socially speaking, I am above reproach. Have I not sacrificed my life and my happiness to my child? Her cries go to my heart; if she were to fall into the water, I should spring to save her, but she is not in my heart.

"Ah! love sets me dreaming of a motherhood far greater and more complete. In a vanished dream I held in my arms a child conceived in desire before it was begotten, the exquisite

flower of life that blossoms in the soul before it sees the light of day. I am Hélène's mother only in the sense that I brought her forth. When she needs me no longer, there will be an end of my motherhood; with the extinction of the cause, the effects will cease. . . . Oh, when Hélène speaks to me, I wish that her voice were different; when she looks into my face I wish that she had other eyes. She constantly keeps me in mind of all that should have been and is not. I cannot bear to have her near me. I smile at her, I try to make up to her for the real affection of which she is defrauded. I am wretched, Monsieur, too wretched to live. And I am supposed to be a pattern wife. And I have committed no sins. And I am respected! I have fought down forbidden love which sprang up all unawares within me; but if I have kept the letter of the law, have I kept it in my heart? There has never been but one here," she said, laying her right hand on her breast, "one and no other; and my child feels it. Certain looks and tones and gestures mold a child's nature, and my poor little one feels no thrill of love in the arm I put about her, no tremor comes into my voice, no softness into my eyes when I speak to her or take her up. She looks at me, and I cannot endure the reproach in her eyes. There are times when I shudder to think that some day she may be my judge and condemn her mother unheard. Heaven grant that hate may not grow up between us! Ah! God in heaven, rather let the tomb open for me, rather let me end my days here at Saint-Lange! I want to go back to the world where I shall find my other soul and become wholly a mother."

On seeing a meeting between mother and child, the priest was able to fathom the depths that lie between the motherhood of the flesh and the motherhood of the heart. He said: "You are right, Madame, it would be better for you if you were dead."

In October the Marquise left the old château. In the life of leisure at Saint-Lange, she had gradually recovered from her grief, and grown fair and fresh. As she drove through the village and met the old *curé*, she bowed coldly in response to his farewell greeting. She did not wish to see him again: he had judged this poor Diana of Ephesus only too well.

AT THIRTY YEARS

Charles de Vandenesse was a man of about thirty, who was considered by his friends to have a brilliant career before him. Just before he was about to depart to Italy on a diplomatic mission, he attended a ball given by Madame Firmiani to thank her for introductions to important friends in Naples. In her rooms he met the beautiful Marquise d'Aiglemont, who had now reached her thirtieth year. He was irresistibly attracted by her personal and intellectual charms and, after calling at her house, indefinitely postponed his departure. Their acquaintanceship soon ripened into passionate love. The Marquise struggled against her feelings for some months, saying to herself: "I will be faithful to him who died for me"; but the day came when she capitulated.

General d'Aiglemont came in at the very moment of the confession of love.

"The ministry has gone out," he said; "your uncle will be in the new cabinet, so you stand an uncommonly good chance of an embassy, Vandenesse."

Charles and Julie looked at each other and blushed.

"I do not care to leave Paris now," Charles said.

"We know why," said the General, with a knowing look: "You do not like to leave your uncle, because you don't want to lose your chance of succeeding to the title."

The Marquise took refuge in her room, and passed the pitiless verdict upon her husband: "His stupidity is really beyond anything."

THE FINGER OF GOD

On a beautiful summer morning, Charles Vandenesse and Julie d'Aiglemont were strolling along the boulevard leading to the *Jardin des Plantes*, accompanied by a little brown-eyed maid and a fair-skinned, toddling boy. The girl was sullen; but the others were ideally happy. Hélène refused to play with her little brother and was sharply reproved by her mother. Charles danced the baby in his arms and showered kisses upon him. A delicately fair woman radiant with smiles, a child of

love, a young man with the irresistible charm of youth and a cloudless sky, left nothing wanting in nature to complete a picture of perfect harmony. At nine o'clock Charles tenderly embraced his companion, jumped into his waiting tilbury and drove away. While Julie was gazing lovingly after him, the little boy ran down to the bridge and asked his sister why she did not come to say good-by. She gave him an angry push and he fell into the muddy river. Hélène's horrified shrieks did not succeed in summoning assistance in time to save the child. Had Hélène avenged her father? Her jealousy surely was the sword of God.

TWO MEETINGS

The General had made a large fortune under the Restoration; and, as his duties would not allow him to live far from the court, he had taken a charming house at Versailles, where he lived, with his wife, his beautiful daughter, Hélène, now seventeen, and three other children, Gustave, Abel, and Moïna.

One night, while the servants were absent celebrating the wedding of one of their number, the General himself answered the gate at the loud rapping of a stranger, who demanded shelter and protection for two hours. Extraordinary as the request was, the General conducted him to an upper room and there left him. In a few minutes, there was another knocking at the gate, and *gendarmes* inquired of the General whether anything had been seen of a fugitive murderer. The General respected his promise of protection to the stranger, and the officers departed. On the expiration of the two hours, the General denounced the blood-stained criminal. The word "murderer" seemed to mark an epoch in Hélène's life; there was not a trace of surprise in her face. She looked as if she had been waiting for this—for him. Those vast thoughts of hers had found a meaning. The punishment reserved by Heaven for her sins toward little Charles flamed out before her. In her own eyes she was as great a criminal as this murderer; she confronted him with her quiet gaze: she was his fellow, his sister. It seemed to her that in this accident God's command had been made manifest: she determined to throw in her lot

with the murderer and wipe away the blood with her devotion. A terrible scene was terminated with the departure of the pair.

They had no sooner gone than the General realized how his daughter had been goaded into the action she had taken. He cursed his weakness and summoned assistance from every direction to overtake the fugitives, but in vain. He loaded his wife with reproaches.

That terrible Christmas night, when the murderer stole Hélène, as it were, was like a warning sent by fate. The Marquis was ruined by the failure of his stockbroker; he borrowed money on his wife's property, and lost it trying to retrieve his fortunes. Driven to desperation, he left France. His family heard little of him for six years, when the Marquis wrote that he was coming home. So one fine morning a Spanish brig, with several French merchants on board, was almost within sight of Bordeaux. Among the passengers was the Marquis, who was wealthy once more. The joyful anticipations of all were dashed by the approach of a privateer, which rapidly overhauled them. Treachery on board made resistance useless; the brig was looted and the passengers were thrown overboard. As the Marquis was dragged to the rail, there was mutual recognition between him and the captain of the privateer. It was the murderer, with whom Hélène had gone away. The Marquis's life was saved. He was taken on board the privateer, where he found his daughter queen of the vessel, happy and contented, with children about her and surrounded with the luxury of a sultana. She declared that happiness was no word to express such bliss as hers. In her husband's heart she had found an infinite love, and every member of his crew was her slave.

The Marquis was sent ashore in a boat, with lavish gifts for his wife and children; but the privations he had undergone had so undermined his health that he died in 1833.

Shortly after his death, the Marquise, to satisfy one of the capricious whims of Moïna, took her to a watering-place in the Pyrenees. A child's cries kept Moïna awake one night. The next morning, on inquiry, the Marquise learned from the landlady that the latter had taken in a starving woman and child, out of charity. A kindly instinct prompted the Marquise to

visit the sufferers; and in the mother she recognized her eldest daughter, whose babe had just drawn its last breath. Moïna came in and saw her mother holding Hélène's ice-cold hand. The widowed woman, who had escaped shipwreck with only one of her children, cried: "All this is your work. If you had but been for me all that——"

"Your sister," said Madame d'Aiglemont, in tears to Moïna, "doubtless meant to tell you that a girl will never find happiness in a romantic life, in living as nobody else does, and, above all things, far away from her mother."

THE OLD AGE OF A GUILTY MOTHER

In June, 1844, a lady about fifty years old was strolling in the grounds of one of the finest mansions in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. It was the Marquise d'Aiglemont, the mother of the Comtesse Moïna de Saint-Hereën, to whom she had made over the mansion and almost her whole fortune, reserving only an annuity for herself. Moïna was her only surviving child: Gustave had died of cholera and Abel had fallen in Algeria. Moïna, beautiful and fascinating from childhood, was her mother's favorite. The springs of the Marquise's life lay in that young heart. The spoiled child naturally rewarded her mother with rank ingratitude. She seemed to take pleasure in humiliating her before the guests who called or were being entertained. The Marquise d'Aiglemont bore all this uncomplainingly; but in the absence of the Comte de Saint-Hereën for six months on a political mission, the Comtesse had been amusing herself with a flirtation with the shallow Alfred de Vandenesse, and would pay no attention to her mother's warnings. But if Alfred made her shudder with disgust, the unhappy mother was obliged to conceal the strongest reason for her loathing in the deepest recesses of her heart. Alfred was too corrupt and Moïna too clever to believe such a revelation of a tie of blood: the young Comtesse would only turn it off as a piece of maternal strategy. Madame d'Aiglemont had built her prison-walls with her own hands; she had immured herself only to see Moïna's happiness ruined thence before she died; she was to look on helplessly at the ruin of the young life which

had been her pride and joy. What words can describe anguish so hideous beyond belief, such unfathomed depths of pain?

Moïna was late rising that morning and met her mother's representations of the dangers she was running with cool insolence. Her final words were, with a forced laugh: "Mamma, I thought you were only jealous of the father!"

With eyes full of awful majesty and profound sorrow, Madame d'Aiglemont replied in a hardly recognizable voice: "You have been less merciful to your mother than he against whom she sinned; less merciful, perhaps, than God Himself will be."

She staggered out into the garden and fell. Her last words were: "Do not frighten my daughter!"

LOUIS LAMBERT (1832)

This work, in which Balzac said he endeavored "to strive with Goethe and Byron, with *Faust* and *Manfred*," was written and published in 1832. It first appeared in a book called *Nouveaux Contes Philosophiques*, and in 1833 was issued alone as *Histoire Intellectuelle de Louis Lambert*. In 1846, it was classified with the *Etudes Philosophiques* in the *Comédie Humaine*. Much of *Louis Lambert* is autobiographical. For seven years Balzac attended a school in Vendôme, where he met with little sympathy and endured the hardships he describes so vividly. He preferred omnivorous reading to the prescribed studies; and here he wrote a *Treatise on the Will*, which one of the masters burned. It may be noted that Balzac places Pauline de Villenoix in his list of irreproachable women included in his *Author's Introduction* to *The Human Comedy*. *Louis Lambert* may be said to form a kind of trilogy with *The Magic Skin* and *Seraphita*. It was published between these other two metaphysical and mystical works.

LOUIS LAMBERT was born in 1797 at Montoire in the Vendômois, where his father was a small tanner. His parents, who adored their only child, never contradicted him in anything. At the age of five his passion for reading began with the Bible; and from that, till the age of ten, he went over the village begging for books and obtaining them by winning ways peculiar to children. At that period substitutes for the army were scarce; rich people secured them in advance for their sons when the lots should be drawn; but the tanner was not wealthy enough to purchase a substitute for his son, and the only legal means of evading the conscription was to make him a priest; so, in 1807, he was sent to his maternal uncle, the parish priest of Mer, not far from Blois. After a stay of three years with his uncle, an old and not uncultured Oratorian, Louis left him in 1811 to enter the college at Vendôme. He was accustomed to spend at home the time that his uncle allowed him for his holidays, setting out every morning with part of a loaf and his books and going to read and meditate in the woods, to escape his mother's remonstrances; for she be-

lieved such persistent study injurious. Reading was in Louis an appetite which nothing could satisfy; he devoured books of every kind. The *curé* of Mer had two or three thousand volumes, and in three years Louis assimilated the contents of all the books that were worth reading. His memory was prodigious. He remembered with equal exactitude the ideas he had derived from reading and those which had occurred to him in the course of meditation or conversation. He had every form of memory—for places, names, words, things, and faces. He not only recalled any object at will, but he saw it in his mind, situated, lighted, and colored as he had originally seen it; and this power he could exert with equal effect with regard to the most abstract efforts of the intellect.

A strong predilection for mystical studies was due to the influence of the first books he read at his uncle's. Saint Theresa and Madame Guyon were a sequel to the Bible; they accustomed him to those swift reactions of the soul of which ecstasy is at once the result and the means.

Madame de Staël, forbidden by Napoleon to approach Paris within forty leagues, spent a part of her exile near Vendôme. One day, while walking in the park, she chanced upon the ragged tanner's son absorbed in a translation of *Heaven and Hell*. At that time Swedenborg was known to very few writers even, and the lady in astonishment asked Louis in her rough way:

"Do you understand all this?"

"Do you pray to God?" he asked in reply.

"Why, yes."

"And do you understand Him?"

Madame de Staël was reduced to silence for a moment, and then began to question him. On her return home, she said: "He is a real seer." She determined to save Louis from serving the Emperor or the Church, and to preserve him for the glorious destiny which she thought awaited him. Before leaving the neighborhood, therefore, she instructed a friend of hers, Monsieur de Corbigny, to send her Moses in due course to the high school at Vendôme. Then she probably forgot him. A hundred louis which she placed in the hands of M. de Corbigny, who died in 1812, was not sufficient to leave lasting memories in Madame de Staël.

Louis entered the college in 1811 at the age of fourteen. When he left it, three years later, he was too poor to go in search of a patroness who was traveling over Europe. However, he went on foot from Blois to Paris in the hope of seeing her, and arrived, unluckily, on the very day of her death.

When Louis arrived at the college, I was twelve years of age and was passionately addicted to reading. My father, who was ambitious to see me in the Ecole Polytechnique, paid for me to have a special course of private lessons in mathematics. My mathematical master was the librarian of the college, and allowed me to help myself to books without much caring what I chose to take from the library, a quiet spot where I went to him during play-hours to have my lesson. Either he was no great mathematician, or he was absorbed in some grand scheme, for he very willingly left me to read when I ought to have been learning, while he worked at I knew not what. So, by a tacit understanding between us, I made no complaints of being taught nothing, and he said nothing of the books I borrowed.

I neglected my studies to compose poems. In derision of such attempts, I was nicknamed the Poet; but mockery did not cure me. I became the least emulous, the idlest, the most dreamy of "little boys"; and, consequently, the most frequently punished. . . . I felt sympathy from the first for the boy whose temperament had some points of likeness to my own.

After three months at school, Louis was looked upon as an ordinary scholar. I alone was allowed really to know that sublime soul. The similarity of our tastes made us friends and chums; our intimacy was so brotherly that our schoolfellows joined our names; one was never spoken without the other, and to call either they always shouted "Poet-and-Pythagoras."

Louis never earned the rest of playtime; he always had impositions to write. The imposition consisted at Vendôme of a certain number of lines to be written out in play-hours. Lambert and I were so overpowered with impositions that we had not six free days during the two years of our school friendship. We incurred the infliction in a thousand ways. Our memories were so good that we never learned a lesson. It was enough for either of us to hear our class-fellows repeat the task

in French, Latin, or grammar, and we could say it when our turn came; but if the master, unfortunately, took it into his head to reverse the usual order and call upon us first, we very often did not even know what the lesson was.

Our independence, our illicit amusements, our apparent waste of time, our persistent indifference, our frequent punishments and aversion for our exercises and impositions, earned us a reputation, which no one cared to controvert, for being an idle and incorrigible pair. Our masters treated us with contempt, and we fell into utter disgrace with our companions, from whom we concealed our secret studies for fear of being laughed at. We could neither play ball, nor run races, nor walk on stilts. On exceptional holidays, when amnesty was proclaimed and we got a few hours of freedom, we shared in none of the popular diversions of the school. Aliens from the pleasures enjoyed by the others, we were outcasts, sitting forlorn under a tree in the playground.

Louis was a spiritualist. His considerations on the substance of the mind led to his accepting with a certain pride the life of privation to which we were condemned. His passion for mystery often led us to discuss *Heaven and Hell*. Then Louis, by expounding Swedenborg, would try to make me share his beliefs concerning angels. To him pure love was the coalescence of two angelic natures. Nothing could exceed the fervency with which he longed to meet a woman angel. And who better than he could inspire love or feel it? If anything could give an impression of an exquisite nature, was it not the amiability and kindliness that marked his feelings, words, actions, and slightest gestures?

On one occasion, after discussing man's twofold nature, he announced his intention of studying the chemistry of the Will. The treatise that he wrote on the subject was confiscated and destroyed as rubbish by a malicious tutor.

When I subsequently read the observations made by Bichat on the duality of our external senses, I was bewildered at recognizing the startling coincidences between the views of that celebrated physiologist and those of Louis. If Lambert had no other title to fame than the fact of his having formulated, in his sixteenth year, such a physiological dictum as this, "The

events which bear witness to the action of the human race and are the outcome of its intellect have causes by which they are preconceived—as our actions are accomplished in our minds before they are reproduced by the outer man; presentiments or predictions are the perception of these causes," I think we may deplore in him the loss of a genius equal to Pascal, Lavoisier, or Laplace. His notions about angels perhaps overruled his work too long; but was it not in trying to make gold that the alchemists unconsciously created chemistry?

Six months after the confiscation of the treatise, I left school; my mother, alarmed by a fever, carried me home at a few hours' notice, and the announcement of my departure reduced Lambert to dreadful dejection.

I had seen nothing of the first phase of his brain development—up to his thirteenth year. I was so fortunate as to witness the first stage of the second period. Lambert was cast into all the miseries of school-life—and that, perhaps, was his salvation, for it absorbed the superabundance of his thoughts. After passing from concrete ideas to their purest expression, from words to their ideal import, and from that import to principles, after reducing everything to the abstract, to enable him to live he yearned for still other intellectual creations. Quelled by the woes of school and the critical development of his physical constitution, he became thoughtful, dreamed of feeling, and caught a glimpse of new sciences—positively masses of ideas. Checked in his career, and not yet strong enough to contemplate the higher spheres, he contemplated his inmost self. I then perceived in him the struggle of the Mind reacting on itself, and trying to detect the secrets of its own nature, like a physician who watches the course of his own disease.

The third phase I was not destined to see. It began when Lambert and I were parted, for he did not leave college till he was eighteen, in the summer of 1815. He had at that time lost his father and mother about six months before. Finding no member of his family with whom his soul could sympathize, expansive still, but, since our parting, thrown back on himself, he made his home with his uncle, who was also his guardian, and who, having been turned out of his benefice as a priest who had taken the oaths, had come to settle at Blois. There Louis

lived for some time; but, consumed by the desire to finish his incomplete studies, he came to Paris to see Madame de Staël, and to drink of science at its highest fount. The old priest, being very fond of his nephew, left Louis free to spend his whole little inheritance in his three years' stay in Paris, though he lived very poorly.

Lambert returned to Blois at the beginning of 1820, driven from Paris by the sufferings to which struggling genius is exposed there. Judging by the letters his uncle received, he was often a victim to the secret storms and terrible mental anguish by which artists are racked. His feelings, perpetually wounded in the Parisian whirlpool of self-interest, were constantly lacerated. He had no friend to comfort him, no enemy to give tone to his life. Compelled to live in himself alone, having no one to share his subtle raptures, he hoped to solve the problem of his destiny by a life of ecstasy, adopting an almost vegetative attitude, like an anchorite of the early Church.

In the longest of these letters, he complains to his uncle that his long and patient study of Parisian society has brought him to melancholy conclusions. "Here money is the mainspring of everything. . . . But though that dross is necessary to anyone who wishes to think in peace, I have not courage enough to make it the sole motive power of my thoughts. I am absolutely devoid of the constant attention indispensable to the making of a fortune. . . . The man who gives his life to the achievement of great things in the sphere of intellect needs very little; still, though twenty sous a day would be enough, I do not possess that small income for my laborious idleness. When I wish to cogitate, want drives me out of the sanctuary where my mind has its being. . . . Everything here checks the flight of a spirit that strives toward the future. . . . The poet's sensitive nerves are perpetually shocked, and what should be his glory becomes his torment; his imagination is his cruelest enemy. The injured workman, the poor mother in childbed, the prostitute who has fallen ill, the foundling, the infirm and aged—even vice and crime here find a refuge and a charity; but the world is merciless to the inventor, to the man who thinks. Fruitless attempts are mocked at, though they may lead to the greatest discoveries; the deep and untiring study

that demands long concentration of every faculty is not valued here. The State might pay talent as it pays the bayonet. . . . Ah, my dear uncle, when monastic solitude was destroyed, uprooted from its home at the foot of mountains, under green and silent shade, asylums ought to have been provided for those suffering souls who, by an idea, promote the progress of nations, or prepare some new and fruitful development of science."

Louis proceeded to animadvert on the methods of the Institute and the condition of science, art, politics, and religion. He was troubled by the problems of philosophical science; the roots of the past and their inseparability from the future; deism and atheism; and the transmission of animal faculties. He concluded: "Any man who plunges into those religious waters, of which the sources are not all known, will find proofs that Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus Christ, and Swedenborg had identical principles and aimed at identical ends. . . . The last of them all, Swedenborg, will perhaps be the Buddha of the north. His theocracy is sublime, and his creed is the only acceptable one to superior souls. He alone brings man into immediate communion with God; he gives a thirst for God; he has freed the majesty of God from the trappings in which other human dogmas have disguised Him. Swedenborg has absolved God from the reproach attaching to Him in the estimation of tender souls for the perpetuity of revenge to punish the sin of a moment. Each man may know for himself what hope he has of life eternal, and whether this world has any rational sense. I mean to make the attempt, and this attempt may save the world just as much as the cross at Jerusalem or the sword at Mecca. These were both the offspring of the desert. And I, too, crave for the desert!"

When Louis returned to Blois, his uncle was eager to procure him some amusement; but in that godly town the revolutionary priest who had taken the oaths of allegiance was almost a social leper. His only acquaintances were those of liberal, patriotic, or constitutional opinions, on whom he occasionally called for a rubber of whist.

The first household into which Louis was introduced was presided over by the beautiful Mademoiselle Pauline de Villenoix, sole heiress to a Jew, who, in his old age, had married a

Roman Catholic. As soon as Louis saw the lovely young Jewess, he discerned the angel within. With the rich powers of his soul and his tendency to ecstatic reverie, every faculty within him was at once concentrated in boundless love, the first love of a young man. When an accident threw me in the way of his uncle, the good man showed me into the room in which Lambert had at that time lived.

Among his papers I found five letters. . . . He had probably written his love-letters twice over. In these each line was evidently the result of a reverie, and each word the subject of long cogitation, while the most unrestrained passion shone through all. The last paragraphs of the final letter read as follows:

"To-morrow, then, our love is to be made known! Oh, Pauline! the eyes of others, the curiosity of strangers, weigh on my soul. Let us go to Villenoix, and stay there far from everyone. I should like no creature in human form to intrude into the sanctuary where you are to be mine; I could even wish that, when we are dead, it should cease to exist—should be destroyed. Yes, I would fain hide from all nature a happiness which we alone can understand, alone can feel, which is so stupendous that I throw myself into it only to die—it is a gulf! Do not be alarmed by the tears that have wetted this page; they are tears of joy. My only blessing, we need never part again!"

In 1823 I traveled from Paris to Touraine by diligence. At Mer we took up a passenger for Blois. . . . On hearing the name (Monsieur Lefebvre) and seeing a white-haired old man, who appeared to be eighty at least, I naturally thought of Lambert's uncle, and I discovered that I was not mistaken. I then asked for some news of my old chum.

"Then you have not heard his story," said he. "My poor nephew was to be married to the richest heiress in Blois; but the day before his wedding he went mad."

From M. Lefebvre's account, Lambert had betrayed some symptoms of madness before marriage, but they were such as are common to men who love passionately, and seemed to me less startling when I knew how vehement his love had been and when I saw Mademoiselle de Villenoix. . . .

The most serious symptom had supervened a day or two before the marriage. Louis had had some well-marked attacks of catalepsy. He had once remained motionless fifty-nine hours, with his eyes staring; a purely nervous affection, to which persons under the influence of violent passion are liable. What was really extraordinary was that Louis should not have had several previous attacks, since his habits of rapt thought and the character of his mind would predispose him to them. Time was when Lambert and I had admired this phenomenon of the human mind, in which he saw the fortuitous separation of our two natures, and the signs of a total removal of the inner man using its unknown faculties under the operation of an unknown cause.

"When this attack had passed off," said M. Lefebvre, "my nephew sank into a state of extreme terror, a dejection that nothing could overcome. He thought himself unfit for marriage. I at once carried him off to Paris. All through our journey, Louis was sunk in almost unbroken torpor. The Paris physicians pronounced him incurable and advised his being left in perfect solitude with nothing to break the silence that was needful for his very improbable recovery, and that he should always live in a cool room with a subdued light. Mademoiselle de Villenoix went to Paris and heard what the doctors had pronounced. She immediately begged to see my nephew, who hardly recognized her; then, like the noble soul she is, she insisted on devoting herself to giving him such care as might tend to his recovery. She would have been obliged to do so if he had been her husband, she said, and could she do less for him as her lover? She removed Louis to Villenoix, where they have been living for two years."

So, instead of continuing my journey, I stopped at Blois to see Louis.

When I saw the tall turrets of the château, remembering how often poor Lambert must have thrilled at the sight of them, my heart beat anxiously. The marble-floored room was so dark that at first I saw Mademoiselle de Villenoix and Lambert only as two black masses against the gloomy background. To her remark that I was his old school-friend, he made no reply. He was standing, his elbows resting on the

cornice of the low wainscot, which threw his body forward, so that it seemed bowed under the weight of his bent head. His hair was as long as a woman's, falling over his shoulders and hanging about his face. His face was perfectly white. Near him was a bed of moss on boards.

"He very rarely lies down," said Mademoiselle de Villenoix, "but whenever he does he sleeps for several days."

Louis stood, as I beheld him, day and night, with a fixed gaze, never winking his eyelids. Having asked whether a little more light would hurt our friend, I opened the shutters a little way, and could see the expression of Lambert's countenance. Alas! he was wrinkled, white-headed, his eyes dull and lifeless as those of the blind. I made several attempts to talk to him, but he did not hear me. I stayed about an hour, sunk in unaccountable dreams and lost in painful thought. I listened to Mademoiselle de Villenoix, who told me every detail of his life. This woman, this angel, always was with him, seated at her embroidery-frame; and each time she drew the needle out she gazed at Lambert with sad and tender feeling. Unable to endure this terrible sight, I went out, and she came with me to walk for a few minutes and talk of herself and of Lambert. She said:

"To others he seems insane; to me, living as I do in his mind, his ideas are quite lucid. I follow the road his spirit travels; and, though I do not know every turning, I can reach the goal with him. Louis is always in this state; he soars perpetually through the spaces of thought: I can follow him in his flight. I am content to hear his heart beat, and all my happiness is to be with him. Is he not wholly mine? I can live on memory."

After going in to see Louis once more, I took leave. I was afraid to place myself again in that heavy atmosphere where ecstasy was contagious. I was conscious of strange disturbances, transcending the most fantastic results of taking tea, coffee, or opium, of dreams, or of fever—mysterious agents, whose terrible action often sets our brains on fire.

Louis Lambert died at the age of twenty-eight, September 25, 1824, in his true love's arms. He was buried by her desire on an island in the park at Villenoix. His tombstone is a plain

stone cross, without name or date. Like a flower that has blossomed on the margin of a precipice, and drops into it, its colors and fragrance all unknown, it was fitting that he, too, should fall. Like many another misprized soul, he had often yearned to dive haughtily into the void, and abandon there the secrets of his own life.

Mademoiselle de Villenoix would have been justified in recording his name on that cross with her own. Since her partner's death, reunion has been her constant hourly hope. But the vanities of woe are foreign to faithful souls.

Villenoix is falling into ruin. She no longer resides there; to the end, no doubt, that she may the better picture herself there as she used to be. She had said long ago:

"His heart was mine; his genius is with God."

THE COUNTRY DOCTOR (1833)

(*Le Médecin de Campagne*)

This study belongs to the *Scenes of Country Life*, which Balzac did not live to finish. He wrote: "I had to delineate certain exceptional lives, which comprehend the interests of many persons, or of everybody, and are in a degree outside the general law. Hence we have *Scenes of Political Life*. This vast picture of society being finished and complete, was it not needful to display it in its most violent phase, beside itself, as it were, either in self-defense or for the sake of conquest? Hence the *Scenes of Military Life*. . . . Finally, the *Scenes of Country Life* are, in a way, the evening of this long day." Several editions of this work appeared, and in 1839 it was published in its final form. The story of Napoleon's career, told by the old soldier and postman, Goguelat, in the barn to his rustic audience, has always been admired as an independent composition. It appeared in *L'Europe Littéraire* in June, 1833, before the book was published. In his list of "irreproachable figures," to use his own words, created by him, the great novelist includes Dr. Benassis, Genestas, and the peculiar La Fosseuse. The work, dedicated to his mother, bears the legend: "For a wounded heart—shadow and silence."

ON a lovely spring morning, a man of about fifty was riding along the mountain road that led to a large village near the *Grande Chartreuse*. His impassive face showed no admiration of the beautiful Alpine scenery, for he was one of Napoleon's soldiers, and, therefore, a stoic. He wore the rosette of an officer of the Legion of Honor. Pierre Joseph Genestas was an unostentatious kind of Bayard. He had served on every battle-field where Napoleon had commanded. He was one of those natures that are great at need and that relapse into their ordinary simplicity when the action is over. Genestas had just come from Grenoble, having obtained leave of absence. Stopping at a squalid hovel to get refreshment, he found its poor mistress taking care of charity children, and was greatly touched by her assumption of the duties of motherhood. In his conversation with her, she spoke of Monsieur Benassis with reverent affection. It was to M. Benassis's house that Genestas

wished to go. He inquired the way thither, and set off. Soon he caught a glimpse through the trees of the little town's first cluster of houses, and noticed a general air of prosperity as he rode along. A child showed him the way to the house, and the soldier was astonished at the neglected appearance of the premises. Perhaps he should have to relinquish his ideal of Dr. Benassis! An old servant took his horse and told him that the master had gone to the flour-mill. Genestas decided to follow him. The miller's boy redirected him to a hovel, "more wretched even than a moujik's hut in Russia," a very dog-kennel indeed. Here was a dying man attended by an old peasant woman and Dr. Benassis, who turned suddenly when he heard a footstep and the unusual clank of spurs.

Dr. Benassis was of ordinary height, broad-shouldered and deep-chested. He wore a capacious green overcoat buttoned up to the chin, and his dark figure served as a strong relief to his face, which was illumined by the firelight. The face was not unlike that of a satyr. His slightly protruding forehead was full of prominences, his nose was turned up; his cheek-bones were high; the lines of his mouth were crooked; his lips were thick and red; his chin was sharp; his brown eyes were alert and expressed passions now subdued; his hair was iron-gray; his face was deeply wrinkled; his eyebrows were bushy, and his face was covered with red blotches. Dr. Benassis was about fifty. Genestas, who was accustomed to those men of energetic natures sought out by Napoleon, suspected, as he surveyed this man, that there must be some mystery in this life of obscurity.

"Why is he still a country doctor?" he asked himself.

Next he studied the wholly animal face of the old dying *crétin*. He had never seen a *crétin* before and had an instinctive feeling of repulsion. In a few moments, this poor creature died; and not long afterward the passing-bell tolled and the rustic religious procession filed in. The doctor and the soldier took their leave. As they walked along, the doctor described the condition of the *crétin* and the superstitions regarding him; also the story of his settling in this district and the opposition he encountered at first, when he was even stoned. Then he told of the results of his philanthropic and economic schemes.

As they reached the doctor's house, Genestas said that having heard of the miraculous recovery of Monsieur Gravier of Grenoble, he desired to place himself under Dr. Benassis's care. Benassis accepted him as a patient; and when he insisted on paying a fee said that it should go to the chemist in Grenoble to pay for medicines for the poor.

Jacquotte, the doctor's housekeeper, managed everything for him. She loved the house: she had lived there twenty-two years. After the *curé's* death, Benassis, who had just come into the country, bought it with the plate, wine, furniture, sundial, poultry, horse, and woman-servant, the very type of a working housekeeper. Jacquotte was a tyrant by this time.

While strolling in the garden, Dr. Benassis explained more fully to his guest how the population had increased from seven hundred to two thousand souls in ten years and the means he had employed to develop the country and promote various industries. Then they went to dinner.

"My name is Pierre Bluteau," answered Genestas; "I am a captain stationed at Grenoble." This was in reply to the doctor's request for his name, as he led the way to the guest-chamber, a luxuriously furnished apartment, though Genestas was astonished to find the doctor's room simple and bare. The astonishment of his guest caused the doctor to explain his ideas of hospitality and to emphasize how utterly he belonged, body and soul, to the peasants, who were at liberty to come to his house at all times and seasons.

They bade each other good night; but before the soldier slept he mentally reviewed the doctor, who hour by hour grew greater in his eyes.

The next morning Genestas, at the doctor's invitation, accompanied him upon his rounds. The two horsemen visited homes of sorrow and death; they encountered an old soldier, Gondrin, and some old laborers contented with their lot; visited several of the doctor's patients, and, above all, the strange, sensitive, and peculiar *La Fosseuse*, a young girl, a sort of charge of Dr. Benassis, who lived in a rustic dwelling embowered with roses.

"I can love her in no other way than as a sister or a daughter; my heart is dead," said Benassis, when Genestas ques-

tioned him about *La Fosseuse*. Then Dr. Benassis told the story of *La Fosseuse*, whose father, *Le Fosseur*, was a grave-digger and whose mother died at her birth. A neighbor took care of the child till she was nine, and then she was sent out to beg.

They arrived home late. Jacquotte was annoyed, for dinner had been delayed. There were guests, too: Monsieur Dufau, justice of the peace; Monsieur Cambon, a timber-merchant; Monsieur Janvier, the *curé*; and Monsieur Tonnelet, the mayor. Jacquotte announced dinner.

Invited by Benassis, who summoned each in turn so as to avoid questions of precedence, the doctor's five guests went into the dining-room; and after the *curé*, in low and quiet tones, had repeated a blessing, they took their places at table. The linen was of dazzling whiteness, and fragrant with the scent of the thyme that Jacquotte always put into her wash-tubs. The dinner-service was of white porcelain, edged with blue, and was in perfect order. The decanters were of the old-fashioned octagonal kind still in use in the provinces, though they have disappeared elsewhere. Grotesque figures had been carved on the horn handles of the ancient knives.

Society itself seemed to be represented by the types gathered here; and the long conversation was devoted to a discussion of social and economic questions.

After accompanying the *curé* home, Dr. Benassis proposed to Genestas that they should go to the barn and hear the peasants talk. They climbed a ladder into the hay-loft and looked down on the scene, keeping quiet so as not to be seen or heard. Quite a large audience of both sexes were listening to a grotesque story related by a peasant—*The Courageous Hunchback Woman* was its title.

La Fosseuse called for Napoleon's adventures; and Goguelat, the postman, got up from his truss of hay and yielded to the wishes of his audience. He had served under the Emperor, and gave an impassioned survey of Napoleon's career. It was the Napoleon of the People that he described, the hero, the demigod—the Napoleon who bore the Sword of God in his scabbard, Napoleon the Lion of the Desert, father of the soldier, father of the people! When describing the infantry

he was interrupted. "How about the cavalry?" cried Genestas, dropping into the midst of the astonished group. The two soldiers then had a talk; and the crowd screamed: "Long live the Emperor!" "Hush!" said the officer, concealing his deep sorrow. "*He is dead!*" But this the crowd would not believe.

"What do you think of our Goguelat?" said Benassis to Genestas, as they went homeward.

"So long as such stories are told in France, sir, she will always find the fourteen armies of the Republic within her at need; and her cannon will be perfectly able to keep up a conversation with the rest of Europe. That is what I think."

Sitting beside the dying fire, Genestas with apologies asked the doctor the reason for his retired existence.

"Captain," answered Dr. Benassis, "for these twelve years I have lived in silence, and now as I wait at the brink of the grave for the stroke that will cast me into it, I will candidly own to you that this silence begins to weigh heavily upon me."

Dr. Benassis, careless of the judgments of man and full of hope in God, told his story. He was born in Languedoc; and after ten years of the almost monastic discipline of the Oratorians, he was sent to Paris. He studied at the Ecole de Médecin; and, notwithstanding the precautions taken by his father to guard him, he was drawn into the dissipated life of the capital. He had a craze for the stage, actors and acting, and all pleasures. "I became a Parisian," said the doctor, "and to be brief, I led the aimless, drifting life of a young provincial thrown into the heart of a great city." At last he formed a secret connection with a young girl. His father died and left him a fortune and he deserted the girl to live the gay life of Parisian society. After two years, she wrote and asked him to come to see her. She was dying; and she begged him to take care of their child. Love returned to the young man's heart, and he devoted himself to the little boy. He was both father and mother to him. After a time, he met a young girl with whom he fell in love, and offered his hand. When Evelina's parents learned the past history of their future son-in-law and the existence of his son, they broke the engagement. Evelina wrote him a tender farewell, which Benassis showed Genestas with deep emotion, and also his reply in which he

said: "Farewell forever. There still remains to me the proud humility of repentance; I will find some sphere of life where I can expiate the errors to which you, the mediator between Heaven and me, have shown no mercy. Perhaps God may be less inexorable. My sufferings, full of the thought of you, shall be the penance of a heart which will never be healed, which will bleed in silence. *For a wounded heart—shadow and silence.*"

Another grief fell upon Benassis: his child died. "Nothing was left to me here on earth," said the country doctor sadly; "I raised my eyes to heaven and beheld God."

He had eighty thousand francs, and meant to live a solitary life in some remote country. Drawn to the rule of Saint Bruno, he made the journey to the *Grande Chartreuse* on foot, absorbed in solemn thoughts. He saw the *Grande Chartreuse* and walked beneath the vaulted roofs of the ancient cloisters. An inscription over the door of a cell impressed him—"*Fuge, late, tace.*" Discerning an undercurrent of egotism in the dead life of the cloister, Benassis determined to give his life to the suffering poor in the countryside. "When I remembered," he said, "that my first serious thoughts had inclined me to the study of medicine, I resolved to settle here as a doctor. Besides, I had another reason. *For a wounded heart—shadow and silence;* so I had written in my letter; and I meant to fulfil the vow which I had made to myself. So I have entered into the paths of silence and submission. The *fuge, late, tace* of the Carthusian brother is my motto here, my death to the world is the life of this canton, my prayer takes the form of the active work to which I have set my hand, and which I love—the work of sowing the seeds of happiness and joy, of giving to others what I myself have not."

Genestas now gave his true name to Dr. Benassis. The latter had long known of Commandant Genestas. Genestas swore eternal friendship and begged the doctor to accept a new patient—a boy. No, not the son of Genestas, but the son of her he loved; and the soldier told his sad story. To this child Genestas was devoted. Overstudy had developed a weak chest, and Genestas had come to learn Dr. Benassis and his ways before placing the boy under his care. Dr. Benassis

forgave the deception; and Genestas soon brought the delicate lad of sixteen to Dr. Benassis, who pronounced him curable. He left the boy with the doctor. Eight months later, Genestas received a letter from Benassis, telling him of the marvelous improvement in his adopted son. "I will go to see Benassis to-morrow," said Genestas. A few hours later he received another letter, this time from Adrien, his son, announcing the sudden death of the beloved doctor. He was taken ill on returning from visiting a patient and just after receiving a letter, Adrien said, addressed in a lady's handwriting and postmarked Paris. "It is all over with me!" he cried. "Adrien, burn this letter."

When Genestas arrived, he found the whole countryside in sorrow. With the *curé* he visited the grave. *La Fosseuse* was weeping there.

"As soon as I have my pension," he said to the *curé*, "I will come to end my days here among you."

EUGÉNIE GRANDET (1834)

Perhaps because this story touches the mark more closely than any of the rest of Balzac's books, it has been more enthusiastically admired and widely read than those others, with the single exception of *Père Goriot*. It appeared first in Volume I of the *Scenes of Provincial Life*, although the first of its seven chapters had been published during the previous year in *L'Europe Littéraire*. A second edition followed in 1839, and in 1843 the novel took its place, with chapter divisions suppressed, in the *Comedy*. The characters, with a few trivial exceptions, do not reappear in succeeding novels.

N 1789 Monsieur Grandet, called by some Père Grandet, was a master cooper in Saumur, able to read, write, and cipher. When the French Republic offered for sale the Church property in the *arrondissement* of Saumur, the cooper, then forty years of age, had just married the daughter of a rich wood-merchant. With his own ready money and his wife's *dot*, he obtained for a song, legally if not legitimately, one of the finest vineyards in the district, an old abbey, and several farms. Under the Consulate Grandet became mayor, governed wisely, and harvested still better pickings. Under the Empire he was called Monsieur Grandet. When Napoleon, who did not like Republicans, superseded him, he quitted office without regret.

In 1806 M. Grandet inherited three fortunes—that of Madame de la Gaudinière, born De la Bertellière, the mother of Madame Grandet; that of old Monsieur de la Bertellière, her grandfather; and, lastly, that of Madame Gentillet, her grandmother on the mother's side: three inheritances, whose amount was not known to anyone. M. Grandet thus became the most imposing person in the *arrondissement*. He worked a hundred acres of vineyard, owned thirteen farms, an old abbey, a hundred and twenty-seven acres of meadow-land, and the house in which he lived. Such was his visible estate; as to his other property, only two persons could give even a

vague guess at its value: Monsieur Cruchot, a notary employed in Grandet's usurious investments, and Monsieur des Grassins, the richest banker in Saumur, in whose profits Grandet had a certain secret share.

Financially speaking, M. Grandet was something between a tiger and a boa-constrictor. He could crouch and lie low, watch his prey a long while, spring upon it with open jaws, swallow a mass of louis, and then rest tranquilly like a snake in process of digestion, impassible, methodical, and cold. No one saw him pass without a feeling of admiration mingled with respect and fear, for every man in Saumur had felt the rending of those polished steel claws. Few days passed without public mention of his name. To some his fortune was an object of patriotic pride: they would say to strangers: "We have two or three millionaire establishments, but as for Monsieur Grandet, he does not himself know how much he is worth."

So large a fortune covered with a golden mantle all the actions of this man. If in early days some peculiarities of his life gave occasion for laughter or ridicule, laughter and ridicule had long ago died away. His speech, his clothing, his gestures, the blinking of his eyes, were law to the countryside, where everyone had come to understand the deep, mute wisdom of his slightest actions.

M. Grandet's manners were very simple. He spoke little. If people talked to him he listened coldly, and four sentences sufficed him usually in the solution of all matters of business: "I don't know; I cannot; I will not; I will see about it." He never said yes or no, and never committed himself to writing. His wife, whom he had reduced to a state of helpless slavery, was a useful screen to him in business, he often saying: "I can decide nothing without consulting my wife." He went nowhere among friends; he neither gave nor accepted dinners; he made no stir or noise, seeming to economize in everything. He kept but one servant, La Grande Nanon, so called on account of her height, who did all the work of the household. In short, M. Grandet was a cold-blooded, calculating miser, who counted every penny of expenditure and gloated in secret over his fast-accumulating hoard. He concentrated every feeling upon the enjoyments of avarice and upon the only

human being who was anything whatever to him—his daughter and sole heiress, Eugénie.

Only six individuals had a right of entrance to M. Grandet's house. The most important of the first three was a nephew of M. Cruchot, who, since his appointment as President of the Civil Courts of Saumur, had signed himself C. de Bonfons. He was thirty-three years old, possessed the estate of Bonfons, worth seven thousand francs a year, and had expectations from an uncle, the Abbé Cruchot, as well as his uncle the notary, both of whom were thought to be very rich. These three Cruchots, allied to twenty families in the town, formed a party, like the Medici in Florence. Opposed to them were the party of the Des Grassins, consisting of the banker and Madame des Grassins, their son Adolphe, twenty-three years of age, and their cousins and allies. The object of the ambition of each of these parties was to obtain the hand of the rich heiress, the one for Monsieur le président, the other for Adolphe.

This secret warfare between the Cruchots and the Des Grassins kept the various social circles of Saumur in violent agitation; but some of the oldest inhabitants, wiser than their fellows, declared that the Grandets would never let the property go out of the family, but would marry Mademoiselle Eugénie to the son of M. Grandet of Paris, a wealthy wholesale wine-merchant. To this the Cruchotines and Grassinists replied: "The two brothers have seen each other but twice in thirty years, and Monsieur Grandet of Paris has ambitious designs for his son. He is mayor of an *arrondissement*, colonel of the National Guard, judge in the commercial courts; he disowns the Grandets of Saumur, and means to ally himself with some noble family."

In 1811 the Cruchotines won a signal advantage over the Grassinists. Maître Cruchot, the president, aided by the abbé, succeeded in procuring for M. Grandet the estate of the Marquis de Froidfond, remarkable for its park, its mansion, its farms and forests, and worth about three millions.

La Grande Nanon had lived with Grandet ever since she was twenty-two years old, now about thirty-five years. She was tall and ugly, with a complexion that would have done credit to a grenadier, and with sinewy arms and the hands of

a cartman. Grandet, a good judge of corporeal strength, engaged her when she was rejected from door to door, and the poor girl never forgot it. She attached herself in all sincerity to her master, who ruled her and worked her with feudal authority. She cooked and washed; she got up early and went to bed late; she protected the property of her master like a faithful dog, and obeyed without a murmur his most absurd exactions. From her yearly wages of sixty francs she had been enabled to invest four thousand francs in an annuity with Maître Cruchot, and every servant in town was jealous of her.

A single tallow candle usually sufficed the Grandet family for the evening, and no fire was ever lighted in the living-room before Eugénie's birthday *fête* in the middle of November. On this day her father always went to her bedside in the morning and solemnly presented her with a gold piece, while Madame Grandet gave her daughter a winter and a summer dress. In the evening the Cruchotines and the Grassinists came after the dinner was over and endeavored to surpass each other in tokens of respect.

One evening, in the year 1819, the two factions were gathered in the great room, illuminated by two tallow candles in honor of the occasion, to congratulate Eugénie on her twenty-third birthday. The old cooper, with inward self-conceit, looked over the company, and said to himself:

"They are all after my money. Hey! neither the one nor the other shall have my daughter; but they are useful—useful as harpoons to fish with."

Just as Madame Grandet had won a pool of sixteen sous at loto, the largest ever pooled in that house, the knocker on the house-door resounded with such a noise that the women all jumped in their chairs.

"Who the devil is that?" cried Grandet.

Nanon took one of the candles and went to open the door, followed by her master.

"Grandet! Grandet!" cried his wife, running to the door, moved by a sudden impulse of fear.

"Go back to your loto!" he shouted, pulling the door to. The noise of the porter, carrying heavy luggage up the stair-

case, was heard, and soon after Grandet returned, followed by a young man who saluted the company gracefully.

"Sit down near the fire," said Grandet.

"You are cold, no doubt, Monsieur," said Madame Grandet.

"Just like all women," growled Grandet, looking up from a letter he was reading. "Do let Monsieur rest himself."

"But, father, perhaps Monsieur would like to take something," said Eugénie.

"He has got a tongue," said the old man sternly.

Monsieur Charles Grandet, of Paris, a handsome young man of twenty-two, presented a singular contrast to the worthy provincials who, disgusted at his aristocratic bearing, were all studying him with sarcastic intent. In this, his first visit to the provinces, he took a fancy to make his appearance with the superiority of a man of fashion, and to make his visit an epoch. He therefore brought with him a great number of costumes, including his whole collection of waistcoats and every variety of collar and cravat known at the time. He brought too all his dandy knickknacks, and his pretty gold toilet-set—a present from his mother; in short, as complete a cargo of Parisian frivolities as it was possible for him to get together.

The loto game soon came to an end, for Grandet had taken from the table the candle to read his letter. When he had finished he turned to his nephew with a humble, timid air, and asked, "Have you warmed yourself?"

"Thoroughly, my dear uncle."

"Is the room all ready?" he asked of his wife.

The company arose at these words and took their departure. When they were left alone, Grandet said to his nephew:

"It is too late to talk of the matters which have brought you here; to-morrow we will take a suitable moment. We breakfast at eight o'clock."

Charles did not appear at breakfast.

"He's sleeping like a cherub," said Nanon. "I went in and I called him: no answer."

"Let him sleep," said Grandet. "He'll wake soon enough to hear ill-tidings. His father has blown his brains out."

"My uncle?" cried Eugénie.

"Poor young man!" exclaimed Madame Grandet.

"Poor indeed!" said Grandet; "he isn't worth a sou!"

Eugénie stopped eating. Her heart was wrung, as the young heart is wrung when pity overflows the whole being of a woman. The poor girl wept.

"You will say nothing to him about it, Madame Grandet, till I return," said the old man. "I shall be back at noon. As for you, Mademoiselle Eugénie, if it is for that dandy you are crying, that's enough, child. He is going off like a shot to the Indies. You will never see him again."

When Grandet finally broke to Charles the news of his father's failure and suicide, of which he had no suspicion, the young man utterly collapsed and kept his room for several days. His sobs aroused Eugénie's pity, and she shuddered to hear her father's remarks on his grief. When she and her mother suggested something for the young man's comfort, the old man said: "Charles is nothing at all to us; he hasn't a farthing, his father has failed for four millions. When this dandy has cried his fill, off he goes from here. I won't have him revolutionizing my household. He is going to the West Indies at his father's request, and he will try to make his fortune there."

Eugénie trembled at her father's comments, and from that hour she began to judge him. Madame Grandet, troubled by her daughter's sweet, persuasive tones as she sympathized with her cousin's grief, said, "Take care, you will love him!"

In the meantime Grandet had consulted M. de Bonfons in relation to his brother's affairs. The president informed him that bankruptcy, which was attended with dishonor, could be prevented by liquidation, that is, by the appointment of a receiver for the property. "When a man fails, he is dishonored," said the president; "but when he merely liquidates, he remains an honest man."

The result of the conference was that Grandet, to save the honor of the family name, agreed to liquidate his brother's business. The president said that in a few months the debts might be bought up for a certain sum, and then paid in full by an agreement.

Grandet employed Des Grassins to call a meeting of the creditors, who elected the banker, together with another banker of Paris, as liquidators, with full power to protect both the honor of the family and the interests of the claimants. Every creditor acceded, each saying confidently, "Grandet of Saumur will pay."

Charles, though but twenty-one years old, was a true child of Paris and too much a man of the world to be possessed of noble sentiments. But Eugénie was too inexperienced to know that, and her sympathy for him soon turned to love. She pitied his poverty—not worth a sou, as her father said—and pressed upon him her little hoard of gold, a purse of rare coins of the value of about six thousand francs. In return he entrusted her with a leather-covered dressing-case with his gold toilet-articles, showing her a secret spring which opened a hidden drawer and disclosed two portraits in gold frames set with pearls. "My father and my mother," he said. "If I die and your little fortune is lost, this gold and these pearls will repay you. To you alone could I leave these portraits. Let them pass into no other hands."

She turned upon him a tender look, her first glance of loving womanhood.

"Angel of purity!" he continued, taking her hand and kissing it, "between us two money is nothing. Feeling, sentiment, must be all henceforth."

When the eve of Charles's departure came, Eugénie had no courage to forbid the kisses he pressed upon her lips.

"Are we not married?" he said. "I have thy promise—then take mine."

"Thine; I am thine forever!" each said, repeating the words twice over.

On the next morning the whole family set out to escort Charles to the diligence for Nantes.

"Nephew," said Grandet, kissing Charles on both cheeks, "depart poor, return rich; you will find the honor of your father safe. I answer for that myself, I—Grandet."

Nine months later the two liquidators of the Grandet estate in Paris distributed forty-seven per cent. to each creditor on his claim. The amount was obtained by the sale of the securities,

property, and possessions of all kinds belonging to the late Guillaume Grandet, and was paid over with scrupulous fidelity, which elicited praise from all. After a certain length of time, the creditors asked for the rest of their money. It became necessary to write a collective letter to Grandet of Saumur.

"Patience, my good friends," said the old man, as he threw the letter into the fire.

Months passed, and Eugénie's birthday came around again. According to his custom, Grandet went to his daughter's room with his gold piece and asked to see her collection.

Eugénie hesitated, then made a few steps toward the door, turned abruptly, and said:

"I have not got my gold."

"Not got your gold!" cried Grandet. "You are mistaken, Eugénie."

"No."

He swore a terrible oath. "What have you done with it?"

"Grandet, your anger will kill me," said poor Madame Grandet, who had been ailing for some time.

"Nonsense; you never die in your family. Eugénie, what have you done with your gold?" he cried, rushing upon her.

"Monsieur," said the daughter, "my mother is ill. Look at her; do not kill her."

"Nanon, help me to bed," said the poor woman in a feeble voice; "I am dying——"

"Eugénie, when your mother is in bed, come down," said Grandet, leaving the room.

When Eugénie went down and still declined to tell her father what she had done with her gold, Grandet said: "I will not see you again until you submit. Go to your chamber. You will stay there till I give you permission to leave it. Nanon will bring you your bread and water. You hear me—go!"

After several months of suffering, during which she did not have a physician until near the end, Madame Grandet died. "My child," she said, as she expired, "there is no happiness except in heaven; you will know it some day."

Five years passed with nothing to relieve the monotony of Eugénie's sad existence. In all that time no word ever came from Charles. Toward the close of 1827 her father, then

eighty-two, was stricken with paralysis. Eugénie devoted all her care and attention to him. His last words to her were, "Take care of it all," meaning his gold. "You will render me an account yonder!"

Eugénie Grandet was now alone in the world in that gray house, with none but Nanon to whom she could turn with the certainty of being understood. She learned from Maître Cruchot that she was the possessor, in real and personal property, besides interest to be collected, of about seventeen million francs.

"Where is my cousin?" was her one thought.

"If I knew where he was, the darling," said Nanon, "I'd go on foot to find him."

"The ocean is between us," Eugénie replied.

At that time Charles Grandet had just returned from the West Indies, bringing nineteen hundred thousand francs in gold dust, gathered by trading in all kinds of merchandise, lawful and unlawful, in selling slaves, and in practising usury. On the passage he met Monsieur d'Aubrion, a gentleman-in-ordinary to his Majesty Charles X, who had married a woman of fashion, once wealthy, but now reduced to an income of twenty thousand francs. They had an ugly daughter whom the mother wished to marry without a *dot*, and she promised Charles Grandet to obtain a royal ordinance from Charles X, which would authorize him to take the name and arms of D'Aubrion, and to succeed to the titles of Captal de Buch and Marquis d'Aubrion. Intoxicated with ambition, and believing his father's affairs to have been settled by his uncle, he imagined himself already settled down in the Faubourg Saint-Germain as the Comte d'Aubrion. Des Grassins, hearing of his return with a large fortune, called on him and inquired about the three hundred thousand francs still needed to settle his father's debts. Charles listened coldly and said: "My father's affairs are not mine."

"But suppose that your father's estate were within a few days to be declared bankrupt?"

"Monsieur, in a few days I shall be called the Comte d'Aubrion: you will understand, therefore, that what you threaten is of no consequence to me."

Eugénie was sitting one afternoon on a bench in the garden, when she received a letter from Charles informing her of his return and of his approaching marriage to Mademoiselle d'Aubrion, which would give him title and position. In a postscript, he said: "I enclose a check on the Des Grassins's bank for eight thousand francs to your order, payable in gold, which includes the capital and interest of the sum you were kind enough to lend me. . . . You can send my dressing-case by the diligence to the Hôtel d'Aubrion, Rue Hillerin-Bertin."

"My mother was right," said Eugénie, weeping. "Suffer —and die!"

Madame des Grassins called with a letter she had received from her husband in Paris. It detailed his call on Charles Grandet and the latter's reply concerning his father's debts: "There are twelve hundred thousand francs legitimately owing to the creditors, and I shall at once declare his father a bankrupt. . . . Still, I have too much respect for Mademoiselle Eugénie to act in this matter before you have spoken to her about it."

Eugénie paused here, coldly said, "I thank you," and returned the letter.

That evening she entertained the usual company, hiding her misery behind a veil of courtesy, and when the party rose to leave and M. de Bonfons was about to take his cane, she said:

"Stay, Monsieur le Président."

The President turned pale and resumed his seat.

When they were left alone, "Monsieur le Président," said Eugénie with emotion, "I know what pleases you in me. Swear to leave me free during my whole life, to claim none of the rights which marriage will give you over me, and my hand is yours. Friendship is the only sentiment which I can give to a husband. But you can possess my hand and my fortune only at the cost of doing me an inestimable service. Here are fifteen hundred thousand francs. Go to Paris, find Monsieur des Grassins, learn the names of my uncle's creditors, pay them in full, with interest at five per cent., and get full and legal receipts. Take all these to my Cousin Grandet, and give them to him with this letter. On your return I will keep my word."

When the President heard the exclamation of Charles Grandet when he put the receipts and his cousin's letter into his hands, he could not repress a smile.

"We will announce our marriages at the same time," remarked M. de Bonfons.

"Ah! you marry Eugénie? Well, I am delighted. But—she must be rich!"

"She had," said the President, with a mischievous smile, "about nineteen millions four days ago; she has only seventeen to-day."

Charles looked at him thunderstruck.

"Seventeen mil——"

"Yes, Monsieur, we shall muster between us an income of seven hundred and fifty thousand francs."

Six months after the marriage of Eugénie and M. de Bonfons, he was appointed Councillor in the Cour Royale at Angers, then Judge in the Superior Courts, and finally President of them. He hoped to be returned to the Chamber of Deputies, and to secure a peerage, but he died eight days after his election as Deputy of Saumur. As he had drawn a careful contract in which husband and wife gave to each other, in case they should have no children, their entire property of every kind, all his possessions fell to Eugénie. God thus flung piles of gold upon this prisoner to whom gold was a matter of indifference, who longed for heaven, who lived, pious and good, in holy thoughts, succoring the unfortunate in secret, and never wearying of such deeds. But, in spite of her vast wealth, she always lived as the poor Eugénie Grandet once lived.

PÈRE GORIOT (1835)

This tale is included in the *Scènes de la Vie Privée.* After appearing as a serial in the *Revue de Paris* in 1834–1835, it was published in two volumes in 1835, and a second edition was called for the same year. According to Balzac's own authority, he wrote the novel in twenty-five days. *Père Goriot* has been called "the French King Lear"; but it has no Cordelia to soften the sorrows of the pathetic old man. Père Goriot and Madame Vauquer appear in no other work; but many of the other characters frequently reappear. This book introduces the ubiquitous Eugène de Rastignac; and Vautrin, or *Trompe-la-Mort,* who figures in *Illusions Perdues* and *Splendeurs et Misères,* is of great importance in this volume. Père Goriot's two undutiful and ungrateful daughters, Madame de Restaud and Madame de Nucingen, occur in other books and stories—Madame de Beauséant and the Marquis d'Ajuda in *La Femme Abandonnée;* Poiret and La Michonneau in *Splendeurs et Misères,* and Poiret also in *Les Employés;* Bianchon is a familiar character in *La Peau de Chagrin* and many novels of the *Comédie;* the Taillefers in *L'Auberge Rouge;* Maxime de Trailles in *Béatrix;* and the *Duchesse de Langeais,* one of Balzac's most fascinating women, in a story to which her name is given in the *Histoire des Treize.*

THE Maison Vauquer, which had been kept by Madame Vauquer for forty years, was in one of the least known and ugliest quarters of Paris—in the Rue Neuve-Sainte-Geneviève, not far from the Panthéon. The front of this boarding-house stood at right angles to the road, and looked upon a little garden, in which grew artichokes and rows of pyramidal fruit-trees, surrounded by a border of lettuce, pot-herbs, and parsley. Over the entrance were the words in large letters MAISON VAUQUER, and beneath these, in small letters, *Lodgings for both sexes, etc.* The house was three stories high; and there were five windows in each story, the blinds of which were always awry. It was built of rough stone and covered with yellowish stucco. A French window gave access to the sitting-room on the ground floor—a dreary and depressing place, connected by a door into the dining-room. The furniture was covered with black horsehair; on a round marble-topped table, in the center of the room, stood a white china tea-service; and

the wall-paper above the wainscot was stamped with scenes from *Télémaque*; that of Calypso's banquet to Ulysses had suggested jokes to the boarders for forty years. The excessive neatness of the hearth showed that a fire was rare; and on the chimneypiece a vase filled with artificial flowers, imprisoned under a glass shade, stood on either side of a very ugly bluish marble clock. The damp, stuffy, musty, and rancid odor exhaled by this room, which might be termed "the boarding-house smell," was like the delicate fragrance of a boudoir when compared with that of the adjoining dining-room. So dirty were the painted paneled walls that it was impossible to discover their real color. On the sticky surfaces of the sideboards stood the glass decanters and blue earthenware plates; in one corner a box with numbered pigeonholes was the custodian of the boarders' wine-stained table-napkins. Lamps covered with oil and dust, execrable engravings in black frames, a clock, a green stove, and a table and chairs completed the furnishings. The oilcloth that covered the long table was so greasy that a waggish boarder would sometimes write his name on it with his thumb-nail; the chairs were broken-down invalids; the wretched little hempen mats would slip away beneath the feet; the foot-warmers were hingeless, charred and broken; and the red tiles of the floor were also full of depressions. In short, this room expressed the reign of dire, parsimonious, concentrated, threadbare poverty. Madame Vauquer was the embodiment and interpretation of her lodging-house: you could not imagine the one without the other. She was about fifty, sleek and corpulent, with a bloated countenance, a nose like a parrot's, fat little hands, and a shapeless, slouching figure.

Madame Vauquer had seven lodgers. The best rooms on the first floor were let to Madame Couture, the widow of a commissary-general, and Victorine Taillefer, a schoolgirl to whom she filled the place of a mother; Madame Vauquer occupied the other rooms. The second floor was occupied by an old man named Poiret and a Monsieur Vautrin, who wore a black wig and dyed whiskers and called himself a retired merchant. Two of the four rooms on the third floor were also let—one to a Mademoiselle Michonneau, an elderly spinster, and the other to a retired manufacturer of vermicelli, Italian

paste and starch, called by all the boarders "Daddy Goriot." One of the remaining rooms, allotted to birds of passage, was occupied by Eugène de Rastignac, a young law-student from the vicinity of Angoulême, one of a large family who pinched and starved themselves to spare twelve hundred francs a year for him. He was one of those who realize that their parents' hopes are centered on them and prepare themselves for a great career.

Above the third floor were a garret and two attics, in one of which slept Christophe, the man-of-all-work; and in the other, Sylvie, the stout cook. Several law and medical students dined at the Maison Vauquer, so there were usually eighteen or twenty at the dinner-table. At breakfast, however, only the seven lodgers appeared, and they came down in dressing-gowns and slippers. The dreary surroundings of the house were reflected in the costumes of the boarders—all wore shabby, threadbare, limp, frayed clothes; and their faces were, as a rule, hard and cold; for these people had weathered the storms of life. Mademoiselle Michonneau was angular and sharp; Poiret, a sort of automaton; Victorine Taillefer, a pretty but unhappy young girl, whose rich father intended to disinherit her for the sake of her brother; Madame Couture devoted herself to this almost penniless girl, who soon fell in love with Eugène de Rastignac. Nothing escaped the hawk-eyed, jovial Vautrin, who, despite his invariably good humor and gaiety of spirit, was a mystery to the others. He often put his arm around "Mamma," as he playfully called Madame Vauquer. There was one butt and laughing-stock of the household—the retired vermicelli merchant, Daddy Goriot, "upon whose face a painter, like the historian, would have concentrated all the light in his picture." Why did the boarders regard him with a half-malignant contempt?

At the age of sixty-nine—about 1813—Daddy Goriot had sold his business and retired—to Madame Vauquer's. He took rooms now occupied by Madame Couture, for which he paid twelve hundred francs. He was called "Monsieur Goriot" then. His fine wardrobe and collection of silver impressed Madame Vauquer, who, despite his sunken and watery eyes, the look of stupid good-nature in his full-moon countenance, and

his somewhat boorish manners, felt a desire "to shake off the shroud of Vauquer and rise again as Goriot." Her attentions failed to bring about the desired result; and, toward the end of the second year, M. Goriot asked for a room on the second floor at a reduced price. Henceforth Madame Vauquer spoke of him as Daddy Goriot. The boarders advanced many theories regarding his life, and were somewhat puzzled by calls from two richly dressed, youthful ladies. At the end of the third year, Daddy Goriot took a room on the third floor, and did without snuff and hair-powder. The boarders were astonished one day to see him appear at the table in his own hair—a dingy olive-gray. He had grown sadder, too, under the influence of some hidden trouble, and his face was dreadfully wobegone. In the fourth year, he suddenly dropped into his dotage: his keen, blue eyes had faded and grown dull, and his red, swollen eyelids looked as if they had wept tears of blood.

One evening, Madame Vauquer said half-banteringly:

"So those daughters of yours don't come to see you any more, eh?" meaning to imply doubts upon his paternity. Daddy Goriot was wounded to the quick:

"They come, sometimes," he said in a tremulous voice.

"Aha! You still see them sometimes?" cried the students. "Bravo, Daddy Goriot!"

It was now November, 1819. Eugène de Rastignac had been in Paris for a year, taken a degree, visited his home and returned to his studies. His head was full of dreams of social success, and he was armed with an introduction to a distant relative, Madame de Beauséant. She invited him to a ball; and when he returned he sat down to study, but his mind was dazzled by the recollection of the brilliant assembly, where he had met the beautiful Countess Anastasie de Restaud and fallen in love with her. She had invited him to call. While dreaming of her, he heard a sigh from Daddy Goriot's room; and, fearing that the old man was ill, looked through the keyhole. He saw Daddy Goriot crushing and twisting a piece of silver out of shape. Then he rolled it with wonderful dexterity. Tears fell from his eyes, and he blew out the dip that had served for a light, murmuring the words "Poor child!"

"He is mad!" thought Rastignac.

In the morning Vautrin told Madame Vauquer that he had seen Daddy Goriot at half-past eight selling a piece of silver to an old money-lender, Gobseck, in the Rue des Grès. While they were gossiping, Daddy Goriot called Christophe, who soon came down-stairs with a letter, which Vautrin seized, read the address, *Madame la Comtesse Anastasie de Restaud*, and, holding it to the light, discovered a receipted account.

The boarders gathered at the table. Eugène described the ball, the beautiful woman he had seen there, and remarked that he had seen her again that morning in the Rue des Grès.

Vautrin cut him short: "I think," he said, "she was going to call on Gobseck, an old money-lender. Her name is Anastasie de Restaud and she lives in the Rue du Helder." The student stared at Vautrin. Daddy Goriot looked uneasy. "Then Christophe was late, and she must have gone to him!" he cried in anguish. When Eugène described Madame de Restaud's appearance, Goriot's eyes brightened and he devoured every word. The boarders thought the worst of Daddy Goriot.

In the afternoon, Victorine and Madame Couture described their unhappy visit to Monsieur Taillefer, who refused to do anything for his daughter. Dinner was soon served, during which the usual jests were made at Daddy Goriot's expense and many silly jokes suggested by the newly invented diorama. Every other word had to end in *orama!* They inquired for each other's health-orama and noted the soup-orama, etc.

The next day, Eugène called on Madame de Restaud. On his way to the drawing-room he heard voices and the sound of a kiss. One of the speakers was Madame de Restaud; the other, Daddy Goriot! On entering, he found his rival, Maxime de Trailles, who was shown into the adjoining room, when Daddy Goriot was dismissed. Eugène followed. Soon Monsieur de Restaud entered, greeted Maxime and was introduced to Eugène; and when he entered into conversation M. de Restaud, the Countess, and Maxime retired to the boudoir. When Maxime had left and the Countess had joined her husband, Eugène asked about a mutual acquaintance, "Daddy Goriot, his fellow-lodger." "Sir," said the Count, "you might have called him Monsieur Goriot!" The Countess

turned pale and then red, "You could not know anyone who is dearer to us both," she said, and going to the piano began to play and sing. Eugène took his leave and drove to Madame de Beauséant's, resolving to ask her to help him unravel the mystery. Madame de Beauséant, absorbed in her own troubles over the announced betrothal of her lover, the Marquis d'Ajuda-Pinto, diverted her thoughts with her naïve relative. She promised to be his protector and initiate him into the ways of gay Parisian society. She told him that Madame de Restaud was the daughter of a vermicelli manufacturer named Goriot, and that her sister, Delphine, had married a German banker, Baron de Nucingen. Madame de Langeais, who was calling, joined the Vicomtesse in telling the story of the Goriots.

"The kind father," said the Vicomtesse, "gave each daughter five or six hundred thousand francs to secure her happiness by marrying her well; while he only kept eight or ten thousand livres a year for himself, thinking that his daughters would always be his daughters, thinking that in them he would live his life twice over again, that in their houses he would have two homes where he would be loved and looked up to and made much of. And in two years' time both his sons-in-law had turned him out of their houses as if he were an outcast."

Tears came into Eugène's eyes. "Daddy Goriot is sublime," he said to himself, as he remembered how his neighbor had worked his silver into a shapeless mass. When the Duchesse de Langeais had gone, Madame de Beauséant told Eugène more. The sisters were not on speaking terms. Restaud moved in court circles and his wife had been received. Madame de Nucingen was not yet in society. "If you like," said the Vicomtesse, "to introduce her to me, she will idolize you. I will invite her to one of my great crushes, and bow when I see her. If after that, you can love her, do so; if not, make use of her. You have shut the Comtesse de Restaud's door against you by mentioning Daddy Goriot. Now, let Daddy Goriot take you to the house of the lovely Madame de Nucingen. As soon as she singles you out, other women will lose their heads over you and you will have success. This in Paris is the key to power. You can then go everywhere, and you will find out what the world is—an assemblage of knaves

and fools. I am giving you my name like Ariadne's clue of thread to take with you into this labyrinth; make no unworthy use of it."

The transition from the elegances of the Countess de Restaud's home and the superb Hôtel de Beauséant to the Maison Vauquer was severe. The squalid dinner-table disgusted Eugène. He grumbled a little, told some of his experiences and championed Daddy Goriot. Vautrin was sarcastic and Madame Vauquer amazed to learn that the old man was the father of a countess and a baroness. The medical student, Bianchon, made a capital joke to Rastignac. "That's about all he is capable of," said he; "I have taken a look at his head; there is only one bump—the bump of Paternity; he must be an *eternal father*."

"So you have seen my daughter?" said Goriot tremulously to Eugène. Eugène, taking his hand kindly, replied: "You are a good and noble man. We will talk about your daughters by and by." Eugène was busy with his own thoughts after his first day on the battle-ground of Parisian society. Where was he to find enough money? He wrote to his mother and also to his sisters. He counted upon the noble, generous natures buried in the lonely manor-house, and felt ashamed of his selfishness.

Eugène now neglected his studies and plunged into society. His mother and sisters sent two bags of money to him at the Maison Vauquer, which did not escape Vautrin's keen eyes. He took the "Marquis de Rastignacorama" out in the garden for a little quiet talk under the lime-trees. He astonished the somewhat haughty Eugène by an insight into his ambitions, and riveted his attention. Then he had a business proposition in which Eugène's money-bags were to play a conspicuous part. He was to go out into the wilds of America with Vautrin as business manager and he was to marry Victorine. She was not long to be penniless, because Vautrin was going to get the brother involved in a quarrel with one of his friends. A duel would follow, the boy would be killed, and the bereaved father would send for Victorine. Eugène considered Vautrin a devil incarnate. In the meantime, Eugène had found out more about Goriot. He was a workman in the employ of a vermi-

celli-maker, and bought his master's business after the troubles of 1789. He established himself near the Corn Exchange and made a great deal of money. When his wife died, the instinct of fatherhood developed in him till it became a mania. All the affection in his heart turned to his daughters. He lived for them, gratified every whim, and spoiled them to excess. Each, free to marry as she pleased, got what she wanted: Anastasie desired social position, and became the Countess de Restaud; Delphine desired money, and married a banker. To please his daughters' ambitions, he sold out and took refuge at the Maison Vauquer, when he was banished from his daughters' rich homes.

Eugène was informed by Goriot of the houses at which Madame de Nucingen was received. The old man got the information from his daughter's maid. A great friendship had sprung up between Eugène and Goriot, for the latter was thirsting for any knowledge of his daughters.

Eugène first saw Delphine at the theater, and lost his heart. She was delighted to attract the attention of Madame de Beauséant's escort. The Marquis d'Ajuda took Eugène to the Nucingen box and introduced him. He talked to her of Daddy Goriot and the Countess de Restaud, and a friendship was established. When he went home, he told Daddy Goriot all about Delphine. Eugène noted the terrible poverty of the bedroom, in which there was no fire. It was like the worst kind of a prison cell. Goriot described with passionate fervor his love for his daughters; and when Eugène told him that he had fallen in love with Delphine the old man was delighted.

Eugène had an invitation to dine at the Nucingens and go to the opera; before dinner, however, the Baroness got him to drive with her to the Palais-Royal and made him take her purse and go into a gaming-house. He won, and brought the seven thousand two hundred francs to her. She gave him a wild embrace, and, as they drove back to her house, she told him all of her private troubles. She made Eugène take some of the money and sent the rest to a former lover, Monsieur de Marsay.

On his return, Eugène visited old Goriot, and told him all about the evening. The grieved father determined to see a

lawyer and arrange so that Delphine should have more money.

Eugène was now rushing society and fast turning into a coxcomb. He squandered time and money, and then began to gamble. He played high, and lost and won. Some of his winnings he sent home. At last he got so far down in luck and money that he accepted Vautrin's offer to cash a draft. Victorine, seeing him in trouble, grew sympathetic.

At this juncture a detective, Gondureau, told Poiret and Mademoiselle Michonneau that the so-called Vautrin, at the Maison Vauquer, was a notorious convict, Jacques Collin, nicknamed *Trompe-la-Mort*; but he wanted to make sure. He proposed that Mademoiselle Michonneau pour the contents of a small bottle, which he would send her, into Vautrin's coffee, or wine. He would fall in a fit. Then they must carry him to bed and undress him. A slap on the shoulder would reveal the letters of this branded criminal—this *man of mark*. Mademoiselle Michonneau, who had suffered from Vautrin's caustic tongue, agreed for a price.

Madame de Nucingen had driven Eugène to despair; and in this mood he made love to Victorine. Vautrin was delighted with the story of the betrothal that he read in their faces. He told Eugène that everything was ready for the duel; and that, by breakfast-time, Victorine would be an heiress.

Goriot entered and took Eugène away to inform him that Delphine was out of sorts because she had something in her mind. She was waiting for him—Goriot—to complete arrangements for a set of chambers for Eugène. Goriot had arranged with her attorney for her independent annuity; and on the fifth floor above these rooms he was going to lodge. "I shall not be in the way," he said, "but I shall be there, that is all."

The next morning, as the boarders were breakfasting, a messenger came for Victorine: her brother had been fatally wounded in a duel! She left with Madame Couture. Mademoiselle Michonneau watched Vautrin drink his coffee with interest. The drug acted: Vautrin dropped as if dead. Mademoiselle Michonneau followed the detective's orders, and found the mark on his shoulder. When Vautrin had recovered and was

again in the dining-room, Bianchon facetiously referred to the noted *Trompe-la-Mort*, whereupon Vautrin was thunderstruck. At this moment, soldiers appeared and arrested the notorious Collin, whose black wig was snatched off and revealed a crop of red hair. The boarders forced Madame Vauquer to turn Mademoiselle Michonneau into "the streetorama" and Poiret went with her. Five lodgers were now gone! Madame Vauquer was nearly collapsed.

What now? Goriot in a cab?

Daddy Goriot had come for Eugène! "I am going to dine with my daughter *in your house*," he said; "do you understand? She expects you. Come!"

The cab stopped in the Rue d'Artois. Eugène hesitated to accept the beautiful apartment; but, to his surprise, Goriot owned it all. He had sold out all his property to rent and furnish it. A happy evening followed. When they returned, they told Madame Vauquer that they were going to move. The next day Eugène heard Delphine's voice in Daddy Goriot's room. She was in trouble. The Baron had refused to let her have her money. Madame de Restaud now arrived. She was also in despair: she needed money for Maxime; she had sold the family jewels that M. de Restaud prized so highly! Restaud had found out everything!

Daddy Goriot nearly went mad to see his daughters in trouble. Anastasie was furious with Delphine when she heard what her father had done. There was no money to meet the demands of the daughters. Eugène dashed into the room with Vautrin's old draft, which Anastasie made her father indorse, although he was ill by this time. Then she disappeared, and Delphine went home to dress for the opera. Goriot, nursed by Bianchon and Eugène, constantly talked of his daughters.

Eugène went for Delphine; but she was going to Madame de Beauséant's ball. This was this great lady's farewell to the world. She was going to bury her heart, broken by the Marquis d'Ajuda, in Courcelles. Eugène handed her into her carriage, and returned to the Maison Vauquer in the cold darkness. His education was nearly complete.

"There is no hope for Daddy Goriot," Bianchon told him

on his arrival. The old man still talked of his daughters—his tender-hearted Delphine and his darling Nasie! He called for them; but they refused all summons. Eugène now went to fetch them. M. de Restaud took no interest in the matter; his wife could send only a message: she was under her husband's tyranny. Delphine was in bed, and at first doubted the seriousness of the case; but she finally consented to accompany Eugène. Daddy Goriot grew worse. In his inarticulate moaning, they found he wanted a little locket—the symbol of his heart, for it contained the childish hair of Delphine and Anastasie.

"Ah! my angels!" were the last words the old man murmured. Madame de Restaud now arrived in great distress; but too late to obtain the forgiveness she desired.

The boarding-house dinner went on as usual.

Daddy Goriot was carried to the chapel of Saint-Etienne du Mont. Christophe and Eugène were the only mourners; and "two priests, a chorister, and a beadle did as much as could be expected for seventy francs." They then went to Père Lachaise, followed by two empty carriages with the armorial bearings of the Comte de Restaud and the Baron de Nucingen. With the tear that he dropped on Daddy Goriot's grave, Eugène de Rastignac's youth ended. He looked across the shining world of Paris in the distance that he had longed to reach, and said magniloquently:

"Henceforth, there is war between us!"

And by way of throwing down the glove to Society, he went to dine with Madame de Nucingen!

"Ah, my angels!" were the last words the old man murmured (p. 116)

Etching by E. Abot after the drawing by Albert Lynch

on his arrival. The old man still talked of his daughters—his tender-hearted Delphine and his darling Nasie! He called for them; but they refused all summons. Eugène now went to fetch them. M. de Restaud took no interest in the matter; his wife could send only a message: she was under her husband's tyranny. Delphine was in bed, and at first doubted the seriousness of the case; but she finally consented to accompany Eugène. Daddy Goriot grew worse. In his inarticulate moaning, they found he wanted a little locket—the symbol of his heart, for it contained the childish hair of Delphine and Anastasie.

"Ah! my angels!" were the last words the old man murmured. Madame de Restaud now arrived in great distress; but too late to obtain the forgiveness she desired.

The boarding-house dinner went on as usual.

Daddy Goriot was carried to the chapel of Saint-Etienne du Mont. Christophe and Eugène were the only mourners; and "two priests, a chorister, and a beadle did as much as could be [illegible]." Then went to Père Lachaise, followed by two empty carriages with the armorial bearings of the Comte de Restaud and the Baron de Nucingen. With the tear that he dropped on Daddy Goriot's grave, Eugène de Rastignac's youth ended. He looked across the shining world of Paris in the distance that he had longed to reach, and said magniloquently:

"Henceforth, there is war between us!"

And by way of throwing down the glove to Society, he went to dine with Madame de Nucingen!

"Ah, my angels!" were the last words the old man murmured (p. 116)

Etching by E. Abot after the drawing by Albert Lynch

SERAPHITA (1835)

Seraphita first appeared in *Le Livre Mystique*, with *Louis Lambert* and *Les Proscrits* (Paris, 1835). A portion of it had already been published in the *Revue de Paris* in 1834. In 1840 it appeared in *Le Livre des Douleurs;* in 1842 it was republished with *Louis Lambert.* Since 1846 it has been included in the *Comédie* in the *Etudes Philosophiques.* Balzac's personal estimate of this work is very high. In his dedication to Madame de Hanska he said: "If I should be accused of incapacity after trying to extract from the depths of mysticism this book, which demanded the glowing poetry of the East under the transparency of our beautiful language, the blame be yours! Did you not compel me to the effort—such an effort as Jacob's—by telling me that even the most imperfect outline of the figure dreamed of by you, as it has been by me from my infancy, would still be something in your eyes? Here, then, is that something. Why cannot this book be set apart exclusively for those lofty spirits who, like you, are preserved from worldly pettiness by solitude!" In his *Introduction* to the *Comedy* (1842), Balzac thus explains his aim: "Some persons, seeing me collect such a mass of facts and paint them as they are, with passion for their motive power, have supposed, but wrongly, that I must belong to the school of Sensualism and Materialism—two aspects of the same thing—Pantheism. But their misapprehension was perhaps justified—or inevitable. I do not share the belief in indefinite progress for society as a whole; I believe in man's improvement in himself. Those who insist in reading in me the intention to consider man as a finished creation are strangely mistaken. *Seraphita,* the doctrine in action of the Christian Buddha, seems to me an ample answer to this rather heedless accusation. . . . The wonders of animal magnetism, with which I have been familiar since 1820; the beautiful experiments of Gall, Lavater's successor; all the men who have studied mind as opticians have studied light—two not dissimilar things—point to a conclusion in favor of the mystics, the disciples of St. John, and of those great thinkers who have established the spiritual world—the sphere in which are revealed the relations of God and man."

IN May, 1800, the mountainous amphitheater enclosing the Stromfiord between Drontheim and Christiania was still covered with snow and ice; the falls of the Sieg even had not yet melted. It was a daring thing, therefore, for two human beings to mount the shelves of the Falberg to the summit on their *skis.* Finally they paused, and she whose name was Minna, looking down into the abyss, was fascinated and overwhelmed with the spectacle at her feet, and was about to throw herself down the precipice in her vertigo, crying, "I am dying, my Seraphitus, having loved no one but you!"

Seraphitus breathed softly on her brow and eyes, and immediately she was calmed.

"Who and what are you?" she cried; "but I know, you are my life."

Without replying, Seraphitus left her side and stood on the very edge of the precipice, looking calmly into the gulf. Minna called him back in agony and asked the source of such superhuman strength of mind. The strange being, raising his hand toward the blue patch between the clouds, replied:

"You can look into far greater space without a qualm."

"But what a difference," she said, smiling.

"You are right," he replied. "We are born to aspire skyward. Our native home, like a mother's face, never frightens its children."

They proceeded till they reached a beautiful little meadow full of alpine plants. In Minna's delight in his presence and talk, she exclaimed that she never had seen Seraphitus so beautiful. Seraphitus had a complexion like the internal glow of an alabaster vase, and eyes that seemed to give out light rather than receive it, a frame slight and fragile as a woman's, but of wonderful strength, and hair with light curls.

Seraphitus repelled Minna's proffered embrace, and said kindly: "Come!" To her gentle reproaches, Seraphitus replied by exhorting her to a celestial love, when she would love all creatures, and added: "Some day, perhaps, we may meet in the world where love never dies."

Then he said: "I can give nothing that you want. Why do you not love Wilfrid? He will be your lover, your husband. I wanted a companion to go with me to the realm of light. I thought to show her this ball of clay, and I find that you still cling to it. Adieu! Remain as you are, enjoy through your senses, obey your nature; turn pale with pale men, blush with women, play with children, pray with sinners, look up to heaven when you are stricken; tremble, hope, yearn; you will have a comrade, you still may laugh and weep, give and receive. For me—I am an exile far from heaven; like a monster, far from earth! My heart beats for none; I live in myself, for myself alone. I feel through my spirit, I breathe by my brain, I see by my mind, I am dying of impatience and

longing. No one here below can satisfy my wishes or soothe my eagerness; and I have forgotten how to weep. I am alone —I am resigned, and can wait."

They returned to the valley.

"Make haste, pretty one, the night is falling," said Seraphitus.

The voice startled Minna: it was as clear as a girl's. Manly strength seemed leaving Seraphitus. They hurried through the village of Jarvis to the parsonage, where Pastor Becker sat reading. He affectionately welcomed the pair; and Seraphitus invited Minna and her father to tea two days later.

When Seraphitus arrived at the old Swedish castle, David, a man of eighty, came out to welcome the owner. Seraphitus declined refreshment, and lay down to sleep, while the old man lingered in loving contemplation of the strange being the question of whose sex was so puzzling. He wept as he thought: "She is suffering and will not tell me."

In the evening David came into the drawing-room. "I know who is coming," said Seraphita; "Wilfrid may come in."

Wilfrid had come to urge her to accept his undying devotion; but she reasoned with him as she had reasoned with Minna. Among other things, she said:

"You know full well that I can never be yours. Two feelings rule the love that attracts the women of this earth: either they devote themselves to suffering creatures, degraded and guilty, whom they desire to comfort, to raise, to redeem, or they give themselves wholly to superior beings, sublime and strong, whom they are fain to worship and understand—by whom they are too often crushed. You have been degraded, but you have purified yourself in the fires of repentance, and you now are great; I feel myself too small to be your equal, and I am too religious to humble myself to any power but that of the Most High."

Seraphita told him that she loved him truly, and Minna also, but to her they were one being. She begged him to marry Minna, so that she might see them happy before quitting this sphere forever.

"Yes, I should be sorry to see you married to Minna, but promise me to make her your wife when you see me no more.

Heaven intends you for each other. . . . I torture you, and you come to this wild country to find rest—you who are racked by the fierce throes of misunderstood genius, worn out by the patient labors of science, who have almost stained your hands by crime and worn the chains of human justice."

Wilfrid fell to the floor in agony. Seraphita breathed on his brow, and he fell asleep. Laying her hand on his brow, she explained to him her feelings and mystical love, exhorting him to rise to the rank of those who are in the circle of love and wisdom and who aspire to celestial illumination. She concluded:

"Now gaze at me for a moment, for you will henceforth see me but darkly, as you behold me by the light of the dull sun of the earth."

She gazed at him with her head gently bent on one side, her hair flowing about her in the airy grace which the sublimest painters have attributed to messengers from heaven; and the folds of her dress had the indescribable grace which makes the artist stop to gaze at the exquisite flowing veil of the antique statue of Polyhymnia. When Wilfrid awoke, Seraphita, lying on her bearskin, with calm face and shining eyes, dismissed him with an invitation to come to tea with the Beckers.

Outside he gazed up at the lights in the windows of the castle and asked himself whether he was awake or sleeping. To recover his mental balance, he went to the manse to spend the evening.

Pastor Becker was seated in his large armchair near the stove and in front of a table on which were books, one of which he was reading, and for extra comfort he had his feet in a foot-muff. A beer-jug and a glass were on his right, while on his left stood a smoky lamp. He was of about sixty years, with a noble Rembrandtesque face and head, and as he smoked his long pipe, he occasionally watched the spirals of smoke with a speculative eye while digesting what he was reading. Minna was sitting opposite him, sewing. Her fresh young face, delicately pure in outline, harmonized with the innocence that shone on her white brow and in her bright eyes. Her attitude as she sat forward on her chair leaning slightly toward the light, showed the grace of her figure. She presented the most

complete and typical image of woman born to earthly duties, whose eye might pierce the clouds of the sanctuary, while a mind at once humble and charitable kept her on the level of man.

Until the silence was broken by Wilfrid, the only sound was the heavy step of the kitchen-maid and the sizzle of the dried fish in the frying-pan in the next room.

Wilfrid asked the Pastor for information about the strange being who dwelt at the Castle. He had been six months in the village, and he found that the chains that were binding him were likely to make his stay permanent. On the very first day he fell under Seraphita's enchantment. The Pastor asked, "Are enchantments possible?" and Wilfrid replied that the man who at that moment was so conscientiously studying Jean Wier's *Incantations* would understand his own sensations. After describing Seraphita's mysterious influence over him, he concluded: "I have for the past few days been wandering round this abyss of madness too helplessly to keep silence any longer. I have, therefore, seized a moment when I find courage enough to resist the monster that drags me to her presence without asking whether I have strength enough to keep up with his flight. Who is she? Did you know her as a child? Was she ever born? Had she parents? Was she conceived by the union of sun and ice? She freezes and she burns; she comes forth, and then vanishes like some coy truth; she attracts and repels one; she alternately kills and vivifies me; I love her, and I hate her! I cannot live thus. I must be either in heaven altogether, or in hell."

The Pastor listened with a mysterious expression, glancing occasionally at his daughter, who seemed to understand Wilfrid's words.

"My dear guest," he said, "to explain her birth it will be necessary to disentangle the obscurest of all Christian creeds," and he proceeded to give a detailed description of Swedenborg's life, writings, beliefs, and teachings.

Swedenborg was especially attached to Baron Seraphitus, his most zealous disciple, who was in search of a woman with the angelic spirit, and Swedenborg revealed her in a vision, saying the life of heaven shone brightly in her and she had gone

through the first tests. She was the daughter of a London shoemaker. After the prophet was translated, the Baron came here to Jarvis to solemnize his heavenly nuptials in the practise of prayer. The earthly life of the couple was undoubtedly that of the saints whose virtues are the glory of the Roman Church. They were extremely charitable; they were never angry or impatient, but invariably gentle and beneficent, full of amiability, graciousness, and true kindness. Their marriage was the harmony of two souls in constant union. The wife was simple in manner, sweetly dignified, and lovely in face and form.

In 1783 Seraphita was born. Previously her parents had lived in the greatest retirement in perpetual prayer. They hoped to see Swedenborg. At Seraphita's birth Swedenborg appeared and filled the room with light. He said: "The work is accomplished; the heavens rejoice." The servants heard strange sounds of music, brought, they declared, by the four winds. Swedenborg led the Baron out to the fiord and left him in ecstasy.

"I met him on my way to the Castle. His face was radiant, and his whole appearance inspired. He said: 'Your ministrations are superfluous; our child is to be nameless on earth. You will not baptize with earthly waters one who has been bathed in fires from heaven. This child will always be a flower; you will not see it grow old; you will see it pass away. You have existence, it has life; you have external senses, it has not; it is wholly inward.'

"He told me he had just parted with Swedenborg and felt the glory of heavenly love. I went with him to see the child. As I entered the room, Seraphita raised her head and looked at me. Her eyes already saw and understood. . . . She never was seen nude; she lay spotless on her mother's breast, and never cried; no other hand ever touched her. At the age of nine, she began to be absorbed in prayer, which is her life. In church she is set apart from the other worshipers; if space is not left about her she is ill. She spends most of her time indoors—her faculties and feelings are essentially inward. She is commonly in a state of mystical contemplation. Her understanding, soul, body, everything about her is as

virginal as the snow on our mountains. When she was nine, her parents died at the same instant, painlessly and without any visible malady, after naming the hour at which they should die. She looked at them calmly, displaying neither grief nor pain, neither joy nor curiosity. Her parents smiled upon her. When we went to carry them away she said: 'Take them away.' When I asked her whether she were not grieved at their death, she said: 'Dead! No; they are still in me. This is nothing!' . . .

"Poor girl! she has inherited the fatal enthusiasm of her parents. She fasts in a way that drives poor old David to despair. His mistress, whose incomprehensible language he has adopted, is to him the breeze and sunshine; to him her feet are diamonds; her forehead crowned with stars; she moves environed by a white and luminous halo; her voice has an accompaniment of music; she has the gift of becoming invisible. . . . The fishermen declare they have seen her plunge into the fiord and reappear as an eider-duck and walk on the waves in a storm. The herdsmen say the sky in rainy weather is always clear over the Castle, and always blue over her head when she goes out."

Wilfrid asked to look at Swedenborg's works, and began to read. After supper, the men read, while Minna sewed and dreamed over her recollections.

At midnight the outer door was suddenly pushed open and heavy, hasty steps of a terrified man were heard in the vestibule. David burst into the room, crying: "Violence! Come! The devils are unchained! They wear miters of flame—Adonis, Vertumnus, the Sirens—they are tempting her! Come, and drive them away!" The Pastor laughed at the old man's terror; but Wilfrid and Minna were deeply affected. David said that for nearly five hours she had been standing with eyes raised and arms uplifted in torment, calling upon God. David could not cross the line; the devils had raised an iron barrier between him and her. His despair was terrible.

They all hastened to the Castle, Wilfrid and Minna in advance.

"What a blaze of light!" cried Minna, as they reached the parlor window. "There he is! Great God! and how beau-

tiful! Oh, my Seraphitus, take me to thee!" She saw Seraphitus standing in an opal-tinted mist, which was diffused all round the phosphorescent body.

"How lovely she is!" exclaimed Wilfrid. The Pastor now came up, and looked in: "Well, David, she is saying her prayers!" Suddenly all was dark. They walked home in silence. Pastor Becker felt doubt; Minna, adoration; Wilfrid, desire.

Wilfrid was thirty-six: he was of middle height and well-proportioned, and he had thick black hair and brown eyes, with strong features. Intellectually, he was truly balanced. He had been a student and kept late hours in European capitals, seen active service, and traveled extensively. He had studied matter and spirit and had the longing for the Beyond which comes to most men of knowledge, power, and will. Coming by chance to Jarvis, he saw Seraphita one day, and all memories of his past were wiped out. He did not offer her the ordinary idealization of lovers, but really believed in her divinity. From the first moment, when he suspected the ethereal nature of this sorceress who had told him the secret of his life in harmonious dreams, he resolved to try to subjugate her and steal her from heaven. He would be the representative of humanity, of this earth, recapturing their prey.

The next day, therefore, on the pretext of inquiring for news of Seraphita, he went to cross-examine David. The old man explained in ecstatic language how the devils tempted, while the archangels stood afar and looked on. Mammon, Lucifer, the Prince of Serpents, the Queen of the Covetous, the Sea in her mantle of green, the Animal with the talons of an eagle, the legs of a lion, the head of a woman, and the body of a horse, the Child with its plaints, Song with its music, the Kings of the East with its luxury, the wounded clamoring for help, the wretched, crying, "Do not leave us," Flowers with their perfumes, the Giant Anakim bringing Gold; their comrades and all the Spirits of the Astral Worlds who had followed them, Death promising obedience, and Life saying, "I will not desert thee!" They all cried: "We have fed thee; thou art our child! Do not forsake us!" The angelic spirits marveled at her constancy, and chorused "Courage!" At last

she triumphed over Desire, unchained to rend her, in every shape and species.

Wilfrid went back to the manse and discussed the affair with the Pastor, who thought that Seraphita was merely mad. Wilfrid could not understand her vast knowledge, when she never had been beyond the fiord, nor ever read a book, except Swedenborg's writings. When Minna came in, and her father asked her how her spirit-friend was, she replied: "He is suffering, father. The passions of humanity, tricked out in their false splendor, tortured him in the night and spread incredible pomp before his eyes."

Wilfrid asked her whether she believed in the reality of these apparitions. She replied:

"Who can doubt, that hears him tell of them?"

"Him? Who?" asked Wilfrid. "You speak of Seraphita?"

She hung her head and replied: "Yes, you too take pleasure in confusing my mind. What is your idea of her?"

"What I feel is inexplicable."

"You are both mad," said the Pastor.

The next evening was to them what the supper at Emmaus was to the three travelers. The aspects of the world were to be revealed, veils rent, and doubts dispelled.

On being shown in by old David, they found Seraphita standing by the tea-table. She greeted them affectionately, and told the Pastor that he did well to come, because he was seeing her, perhaps, for the last time, for the winter had killed her. He replied that he wanted more of her than the dainties of her tea-table, and would like her to clear up some of their doubts. Seraphita at great length then gave them her ideas on Spirit and Matter, Skepticism and Belief, Number and Motion, Finite and Infinite, Affinities and Similarities. In conclusion she said: "All your sciences of to-day, which make you so great in your own eyes, are a mere trifle compared with the light that floods the Seer. Cease to question me: we speak a different language. I have used yours for once to throw a flash of faith upon your souls, to cast a corner of my mantle over you and tempt you away to the glorious regions of prayer. Is it God's part to stoop to you? Is it not yours rather to rise to Him? The Seer and the believer have within themselves

eyes more piercing than are those eyes which are bent on things of earth, and they discern a dawn. Your most exact sciences, your boldest speculations, your brightest flashes of light are but clouds. Above them all is the sanctuary whence the true Light is shed."

The subject then dropped, and during the general conversation, Wilfrid asked her why she did not marry. She said she had been betrothed from her birth, and she would invite them to her wedding. She privately told Wilfrid that she had divined his wishes, and begged him to cease to cherish evil thoughts whose triumph would be a torment to endure. To Minna, Seraphita said: "If you could not look into the gulf without destruction, keep your powers for him who will love you. Go, poor child, I am betrothed, as you know."

On their way home, the Pastor said he began to think she was a spirit veiled in human form; Wilfrid was calmed, convinced and defeated; Minna said to herself: "Why will he not allow me to love him?"

Several days passed, during which Seraphita remained in seclusion. When Minna was admitted, she noticed that Seraphita's voice was hollow, and her complexion wan. "We shall lose him," said Minna, when she met Wilfrid outside. "Yes, I love him; why should I not be free to declare my affection? In the presence of Death we may all confess our attachment, and Seraphitus is dying." Wilfrid could not disabuse her mind of this idea.

One day they met Seraphita coming out of the Castle, followed by David, and she invited them to accompany her to the Sieg, which was now falling in a silvery veil. They were all silent for a time in contemplation of the exquisite beauty of spring.

While Minna was climbing a crag for some blue saxifrages, Wilfrid made a passionate appeal to Seraphita to join him in furthering his ambitious schemes, which contemplated the overthrow of the English rule in Asia. He was chilled by her reply that she had reigned already: beings more powerful than he had offered her more; she was loved with a boundless love. Minna returned with a nosegay, telling her that she was more beautiful to her than this lovely scenery and she only wished

she could suffer instead of Seraphita. Seraphita took a last farewell of the sublime landscape, and to all humanity, and had to be helped back to the Castle.

The next day Wilfrid and Minna went to see her, lying on her couch of furs. David was weeping, and refused to listen to her consolations. She refused the Pastor's urgent insistence that she should take any remedies. Minna at last learned that the being that Seraphitus loved above all others was God. Minna knelt and begged to be led to Him. Wilfrid also cried: "Lead us, Seraphita, you have made me thirst for the Light and for the Word. If I may not win you, I will treasure every feeling that you can infuse, as part of you." With a look that enfolded them both, the incomprehensible being cried: "Angel! Heaven is thine inheritance!" She then instructed them how God must be sought, through rough ways, for His own sake, and showed how efficacious were the means of entering on the road by silence, meditation, and prayer, and uttered her last dying hymn to the Almighty. Like a white dove, the soul hovered for a moment above this body, of which the exhausted materials were about to dissever. The aspiration of this soul to Heaven was so infectious that Wilfrid and Minna failed to discern Death, and were inspired by the ecstasy of Seraphitus. They could not tell how they found themselves on the borderline of the visible and the invisible, nor how they had lost sight of the visible and perceived only the invisible. They saw the Spirit knock at the sacred gate, and heard the questioning of the choir within. They heard the soul's reply: "I have conquered the flesh by abstinence; I have vanquished false speech by silence, false knowledge by humility, pride by charity, and the earth by love. I have paid my tribute of suffering. I am purified, by burning for the faith. I have striven for life by prayer; I wait, adoring, and I am resigned."

When no reply came, the Spirit cried: "The Lord be praised!" His tears flowed, and fell on the kneeling witnesses. Then suddenly the trumpet sounded for the victory of the Angel in this last test. The veils were rent, and from an immeasurable height they saw the messenger bearing the good tidings. With a palm he touched the Spirit, and its white wings spread. The watchers then saw the Seraph rise through

blinding lights and melodies into the infinite space. Wilfrid and Minna in their vision understood some of the mysterious words of the being who on earth had appeared to them under the form which was intelligible to each—Seraphitus to one; Seraphita to the other. On their way back to earth from their vision of the higher mysteries, they leaned on each other for love and strength. They took each other by the hand. "Whither are you going?" asked Pastor Becker. "To God!" said they. "Come with us, Father."

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY (1836)

Among his own novels this was one of Balzac's favorites. In 1835 he wrote to Madame Hanska: "I am writing a great and beautiful work, entitled *Le Lys dans la Vallée*, the heroine of which is to represent terrestrial perfection as Seraphita is to represent celestial perfection." A little later he wrote: "But the *Lily!* If the *Lily* is not a breviary for women, I am nothing! In it virtue is sublime and not at all tiresome." He also called it "the poetic pendant of *The Country Doctor*, and in his dedication to Dr. Nacquart he wrote: "Here is one of the most highly wrought stones of the second story of a literary edifice that is being slowly and laboriously constructed." The book was published in 1836, before which time parts of it had appeared in the *Revue de Paris*. It was not finished in that publication, because it was the occasion of a lawsuit, which Balzac won. An account of this appeared in the first edition. Some of the characters appear in other books: the hero, Felix de Vandenesse, in *Une Fille d'Eve* ("A Daughter of Eve"); his brother Charles in *La Femme de Trente Ans* ("The Woman of Thirty"); Madeleine de Mortsauf in *Mémoires de Deux Jeunes Mariées* ("Memoirs of Two Young Wives") and *Splendeurs et Misères* ("Splendors and Miseries"); and Natalie de Manerville in *Le Contrat de Mariage* ("The Marriage Contract"). When writing his introduction to the *Comédie Humaine*, Balzac remarked: "A sure grasp of the purport of this work will make it clear that I attach to common, daily facts, hidden or patent to the eye, to the acts of individual lives and to their causes and principles, the importance which historians have hitherto ascribed to the events of public national life. The unknown struggle which goes on in a valley of the Indre between Madame de Mortsauf and her passion is perhaps as great as the most famous of battles. In one, the glory of the victor is at stake; in the other, it is heaven."

N a letter to Madame la Comtesse Natalie de Manerville, from one who signs himself "Felix," is the following: I yield to your wish. You want my past: here it is. . . . Well, you have guessed rightly, Natalie, and it is better perhaps that you should know everything: yes, my life is overshadowed by a phantom; it asserts itself vaguely at the least word that evokes it; it often hovers over me unbidden. I have, buried within my soul, astounding memories, like those marine growths that may be seen in calm waters, and that the surges of the storm fling in fragments on the shore. . . . I only wish my confidence might increase your tenderness twofold.

A tender, frail, sickly, and sensitive child, misunderstood

and neglected by my parents, and so unhappy that I cursed my existence, I spent my early life in Tours. At fifteen I was sent to a boarding-school in Paris; and at nineteen was suddenly taken back to Tours by my parents, on account of the political troubles. I watched my mother anxiously to discover whether there were in her heart a friable spot where I could insert some buds of affection. I flung myself desperately into my father's library, where I read all the books I did not already know. I longed for death. Great events, of which I knew nothing, were then in the air. The Duc d'Angoulême, having left Bordeaux to join Louis XVIII in Paris, was to be the recipient of an ovation. Touraine prepared for a great ball. To my amazement, in the absence of my father and brother, I was chosen to escort my mother. When I was dressed, I was so little like myself that my sister's compliments gave me courage to make my appearance before the whole of assembled Touraine.

Dazzled by the lights, the crimson hangings, the gilt ornaments, the dresses and diamonds, pushed and hustled, too shy and awkward to ask anyone to dance with me, I took refuge at the extreme end of a vacant bench. A woman, misled by my delicate looks, took me for a boy half-asleep, and seated herself by me with the light movement of a bird settling on its nest. I was at once aware of a feminine fragrance which flashed upon my soul as Oriental poetry has flashed upon it since. I was more dazzled by her than I had been by the ball. My eyes were suddenly fascinated by the white, rounded shoulders. Looking round to make sure that no one saw me, I kissed those shoulders, rubbing my cheek against them. The lady gave a piercing cry, turned sharply around and said, "Monsieur!" I was petrified by a look fired with righteous anger. She rose and walked away with the dignity of a queen. I went home and to bed, an altered creature. A new soul, a soul with iridescent wings, had burst its chrysalis within me. My favorite star, dropping from the blue waste, had become Woman, while preserving its light, its sparkle, and its brilliancy. Suddenly, knowing nothing of love, I had fallen in love. As I thought that my chosen lady dwelt in Touraine, I inhaled the air with rapture; I saw a blue in the sky which I have never since perceived elsewhere. Though mentally in ecstasy, I seemed to be ill; my

mother, alarmed and remorseful, decided that I should spend a few days at Frapesle, a château on the Indre, between Montvazon and Azay-le-Rideau, with a friend of hers. I knew not my fair one's name; but as I passed through the emerald valley of the Indre, I thought if this woman, the flower of her sex, inhabits a spot on earth, it must be this! My heart had not deceived me: it was there that she dwelt; the first château I could see was her home! Her cambric dress was the white spot I could see among some vines under a pleached alley. She was the Lily of the Valley, where she grew for heaven, filling it with her virtues. My host, Monsieur de Chessel, afterward told me that this château was Clochegourde, and belonged to the Comte de Mortsauf, a representative of an old Touraine family. "Does she often go to Tours?" I asked. "She went there lately on the occasion when the Duc d'Angoulême passed through," he replied. He offered to take me to Clochegourde.

As I mounted the winding road to Clochegourde, my heart throbbed in anticipation of the secret events which were about to transform it once for all. A servant told us that Monsieur le Comte had gone to Azay; but that Madame la Comtesse was at home. She appeared at the drawing-room door, and our eyes met. Which of us reddened most deeply, I do not know. She returned to her seat in front of an embroidery-frame, counted two or three stitches, and then raised her proud yet gentle head to ask M. de Chessel to what happy chance she owed the pleasure of his visit. M. de Chessel told her that my parents had brought me home to Tours when the war threatened Paris, and as I was exhausted by my studies, they had sent me to Frapesle to rest and amuse myself. We remained at Clochegourde to dinner.

Felix now described the house, the beautiful view, the two frail children, Madeleine and Jacques, and the Count, who, though only five-and-forty, appeared to be sixty. He was nearly bald, his face looked like that of a white wolf with a blood-stained muzzle. Yet, for all this, he had the air of a gentleman. His lack of vitality had been transmitted to his children, and their health was the one thought of their devoted mother. Monsieur de Mortsauf's strength had been under-

mined by suffering. A devoted adherent of the Bourbons, he had served in the army, been exiled, and seen days of abject misery and illness. He was now suffering from a disease which had developed a capricious temper and hypochondria. His gentle wife, fully appreciating his condition, endeavored to clothe this ruin with the ivy of her gracious nature. Felix soon understood the situation. He grew deeper and deeper in love, and became a constant visitor at the château. He attempted also to entertain the querulous Count, by taking long walks with him and playing backgammon. One evening, after Felix had beaten the Count, and the latter, swept by a terrible gust of passion, poured forth a perfect storm of abuse, Felix walked alone on the terrace. He was soon joined by Madame de Mortsauf, who begged him to forget the scene; but she told him that his sympathetic friendship was a support to her. Felix tried to apologize for his behavior at the ball; but she would not talk about this episode. He told her, however, how love had come into his heart through her, and told her the story of his unhappy childhood. She exclaimed that her childhood also had been a time of great unhappiness, and confided to Felix the sorrows of her married life.

"I have entered into your sorrows and I am one with your soul," said Felix. "I am yours without reserve and will be just what you wish me to be." She checked him by a gesture, saying: "I consent to the compact if you will never strain the ties that bind us." She added: "Monsieur de Mortsauf calls me Blanche. The one person I loved best, my adorable aunt, used to call me Henriette. I will be Henriette again for you."

Great changes suddenly took place. On the restoration of the Bourbons, the Count was promoted to Major-General, and received the Cross of St. Louis and a pension of four thousand francs. The Countess's father, the Duc de Lenoncourt-Givry, was made a peer, with an appointment at court, and his wife's property was restored. Thus, Madame de Mortsauf became a great heiress.

Felix and the Countess discussed the future—the future of her children, and his future. The Countess, who noticed little Madeleine's hand in his, offered it to him.

"Madeleine!" he cried. "Never!"

These two words left them silent and greatly agitated. Felix's own narrative continued:

"I was ere long one of the family. But if I had the delights of being thus naturalized in a family where I made relationships after my own heart, I also paid the penalties. The Count's intolerable temper grew worse and worse, and his delight in domineering over his sensitive wife increased daily. She turned to me more and more for sympathy."

When Felix left for Paris, he carried with him a loving letter from the Countess full of advice; and through her influence, Felix found favor with Louis XVIII. Eight months later, he again visited Clochegourde. He spent several days at the château and returned to Paris.

On a leave of absence, Felix hastened to Clochegourde. Henriette had had a vision of the future, in which Felix had turned his back upon her. Felix vowed his undying love. Madame de Mortsauf grew daily more unhappy in her married life, and cast her burdens upon the sympathetic Felix. The Count had a terrible illness and was tenderly nursed by his wife and Felix; but upon recovery he became even more tyrannical. The King summoned Felix back to Paris.

"At this juncture," says Felix, "I met in the rooms of the Elysée one of those superb English ladies who are almost queens. She was a beauty and a wit, and married to a distinguished British peer. She had become the idol of Parisian society. My acquaintance with Lady Dudley was notorious; and my obstinacy increased her passion. . . . Protected as I was by my passion for Henriette, still I was not at an age to be insensible to the threefold attractions of pride, devotion, and beauty, that said: 'If I were loved as Madame de Mortsauf is, I would sacrifice everything to you.' One evening, after a party, where she had shone with such beauty that she was sure of having captivated me, I found her in my rooms. Lady Arabella was the mistress of my body; Madame de Mortsauf was the wife of my soul. Being a traitor, I became a cheat. I wrote to Madame de Mortsauf as if I were still the boy in the ill-made coat she was so fond of; but I own her gift of second-sight appalled me, when I thought of the disaster any indiscretion might bring on the charming castle of my hopes. My

letters remained unanswered. I was in mortal anxiety and wanted to set out for Clochegourde. Arabella spoke as a matter of course of going with me to Touraine. She agreed to remain in the country near Tours, unknown, disguised, never to go out by daylight, and to meet me at night."

Felix was received coldly by Madame de Mortsauf, who knew all. In the six years that had passed, Madeleine, now fifteen, was restored to health and growing beautiful like her mother; Jacques was still fragile. The Countess was now Madame de Mortsauf to Felix and not Henriette, as of yore. "If I have been mistaken in my life, it is she who is right—*she!*" added Madame de Mortsauf, as she begged Felix to be faithful to Arabella. A long conversation on the terrace proved too great a strain upon the Countess.

The next week, when she had recovered from a fit of illness, Felix begged to be restored to her heart.

One day, while driving with Felix, Madame de Mortsauf directed the coachman to the Landes de Charlemagne. She was determined to see Lady Dudley, who was waiting for Felix there.

As they journeyed on, Lady Arabella, a magnificent horsewoman, dashed by, and pulled up. Recognizing her rival, she dashed away again. After Felix had left her at Clochegourde, Henriette insisted that he should return to Lady Dudley. He did so, reaching Saint-Cyr, where she was lodging, at midnight. Felix tried to make Arabella understand Henriette's nature; but it was impossible. She persuaded Felix to return to Clochegourde. Felix found the Countess pale and grief-stricken. He was in an awkward situation. "I could not be at Clochegourde by day and at Saint-Cyr by night. Arabella had counted on my sense of delicacy and Madame de Mortsauf's magnanimity."

In the evening, when Felix took leave of the family on the terrace, the Countess asked him to walk down the avenue with her. "Good-by, my friend," she said, throwing her arms around his neck with her head on his heart; "we shall see each other no more. God has given me the melancholy power of looking into the future." A very tender scene followed, in which Felix told Henriette she was his best beloved—his only love.

On his return to Paris, Felix devoted himself to Lady Dudley; but he was not happy; and after a time Arabella's love became intolerable.

Hearing that Madame de Mortsauf was dying, Felix got leave from the King to visit Clochegourde.

The Abbé Birotteau, one of those men whom God has marked for His own by clothing them in gentleness and simplicity, and endowing them with patience and mercy, drew Felix aside: "Monsieur," he said, "you must know that I have done all that was humanly possible to prevent this meeting between you. The salvation of that saint required it. I thought only of her, not of you. Now that you are going once more to her, whose door ought to be held against you by angels, I must inform you that I intend to be present to protect her against you, and perhaps against herself! Respect her feeble state." They reached the door of her room, and the anxious priest opened it. Felix then saw Henriette, dressed in white, reclining on her little sofa in front of the fireplace; on the chimney-shelf were two vases filled with flowers; there were more flowers on a table in front of a window. Her haggard face, under a voluminous lace scarf, had the greenish pallor of magnolia flowers when they first open, and looked like the first outline of a portrait of a head we love sketched in chalk on yellow-white canvas.

"You will bring me health as you used to do, Felix," said she, "and my valley will be good to me again. My dear, prove to me that I am not to die, and to die disappointed. They think that I suffer most from thirst. Oh, yes, I am very thirsty, my dear. It hurts me dreadfully to see the waters of the Indre; but my heart suffers a more burning thirst. I thirsted for you," she said in a smothered voice, taking Felix's hands in her burning hands, and drawing him toward her to whisper in his ear: "My agony was that I could not see you. Did you not bid me live?—I will live! I will ride—I, too, will know everything—Paris, festivities, pleasures!"

This dreadful outcry made their ears tingle—the old priest's and Felix's; the tones of that beautiful voice represented the struggles of a whole life, the anguish of a true love always balked.

The Countess stood up with an impatient effort, like a child that wants a toy. When the confessor saw his penitent in this mood, the poor man fell on his knees, clasped his hands and began to pray. "Yes, I will live," she cried, making Felix stand, too, and leaning on him; "live on realities and not on lies. My whole life has been one of lies; I have been counting them over these last days. Is it possible that I should die, I, who have not lived?"

"The next day but one," writes Felix, "on a cool autumn morning, we followed the Countess to her last home. Madeleine's hostility closed Clochegourde to me. I determined to rush into politics and science, by the tortuous paths of ambition, to cut woman out of my life entirely, and be a statesman —cold, passionless, faithful to the saint I had loved. My thoughts went far away out of sight, while my eyes were fixed on the glorious background of golden oaks, with their somber heads and feet of bronze. I asked myself whether Henriette's virtue had not been mere ignorance, whether I were really guilty of her death. I struggled against the burden of remorse. At last, one limpid autumn day, under one of heaven's latest smiles, so lovely in Touraine, I read the letter which, by her instructions, I was not to open before her death—and I read the whole confession of her love for me, which began with my kisses at the ball given to the Duc d'Angoulême. She also begged me to marry Madeleine. 'Farewell, dear son of my heart,' she added, 'I am going to the home of rest, a victim of duty, and—which makes me shudder—I cannot go without a regret! God knows better than I can whether I have obeyed His holy laws in the spirit. I have often stumbled, no doubt, but I never fell, and the most pressing cause of my sorrows lay in the temptations that surrounded me.'

"Henriette's letter showed me one bright star of hope. To live at Clochegourde with Madeleine and devote my life to her was a lot to satisfy all the ideas that tossed my soul. I went to Clochegourde to call on the Count. I told the Count I wished to speak to Madeleine, and he went to fetch her. She stopped me with a gesture, 'Monsieur,' she said, in a voice tremulous with agitation, 'I, too, know all your mind. I would rather drown myself in the Indre than marry you. If my mother's

name can still influence you, in her name I beg you never to come to Clochegourde while I am here. The mere sight of you gives me such distress as I cannot describe, and I shall never get over it.'

"I came away heart-broken; and set out for Paris along the right bank of the Indre—the road by which I had come down the valley for the first time. Then my heart had been full of desires; now I felt it a desert. I was still quite young—nine-and-twenty—and my heart was crushed.

"Lady Dudley was far from my mind, when I found that I had unconsciously entered her courtyard. Her butler showed me as I was, in traveling-dress, into a drawing-room, where she sat, splendidly dressed, with a party of five visitors.

"Arabella assumed a lofty air. She looked at me from head to foot, as she might have looked at some country squire just introduced. As to our intimacy, our eternal passion, her vows that she must die if I ever ceased to love her—all the phantasmagoria of Armida—it had vanished like a dream. I had never held her hand, I was a stranger, she did not know me.

"From that day I have never seen her excepting in company, where we exchange friendly bows, with sometimes a repartee.

"I threw myself into hard work, I took up science, literature, and politics. On the accession of Charles X, who abolished the post I had filled under the late King, I made diplomacy my career. From that hour, I vowed never to pay any attention to a woman, however beautiful, witty, or affectionate she might be. However, all my resolutions have come to nothing—you know how and why.

"Dearest Natalie, in relating my whole life without reserve, in confessing to you feelings in which you had no part, I may, perhaps, have vexed some tender spot of your jealous and sensitive heart. But what would infuriate a vulgar woman, will be to you, I am sure, a fresh reason for loving me. . . . To-morrow I shall know whether I have made a mistake in loving you."

Natalie de Manerville wrote an answer to the Comte Felix de Vandenesse, in which she said: "You received, as you tell

me, a letter from poor Madame de Mortsauf, which has been of some use in guiding you through the world, a letter to which you owe your high fortunes. Allow me to finish your education. I implore you to divest yourself of an odious habit. Do not imitate certain widows who are always talking of their first husband and throwing the virtues of the dear departed in the teeth of the second. I, dear Count, am a Frenchwoman; I should wish to marry the whole of the man I love; now, I really cannot marry Madame de Mortsauf. After reading your narrative with the attention it deserves—and you know what interest I feel in you—it strikes me that you must have bored Lady Dudley very considerably by holding up to her Madame de Mortsauf's perfections, while deeply wounding the Countess by expatiating on the various resources of English love-making. You have now failed in tact toward me, a poor creature who can boast of no merit but that of having attracted your liking; you have implied that I do not love you as much as either Henriette or Arabella. I confess my deficiencies. I know them; but why make me feel them so cruelly?

"Shall I tell you whom I pity?—the fourth woman you may love. She will inevitably be required to hold her own against three predecessors; so, in your interest as much as in hers, I must warn you against the perils of your memory. I renounce the laborious honor of loving you. I should require too many Catholic or Anglican virtues, and I have no taste for fighting ghosts. . . . Why, my dear Count, you began by loving an adorable woman, a perfect mistress, who undertook to make your fortune, who procured you a peerage, who loved you to distraction—and you made her die of grief! Why, nothing can be more monstrous. . . . You met Lady Dudley too soon to appreciate her, and the evil you say of her seems to me to be the revenge of your wounded vanity; you understood Madame de Mortsauf too late; you punished each for not being the other; what then would become of me, being neither the one nor the other? . . . If you want to live in the world and mingle on equal terms with women, conceal with care all you have told me; they do not care to strew the flowers of their affections on stones, or lavish their caresses to heal a wounded heart. Every woman will at once discern the shallowness of

your heart, and you will constantly be more unhappy. Very few will be frank enough to tell you what I have told you, or good-natured enough to dismiss you without rancor and offer you their friendship, as she now does who still remains your sincere friend, Natalie de Manerville."

LOST ILLUSIONS (1837)

(*Illusions Perdues*)

This novel is included in the *Scènes de la Vie de Province.* The first part, *Les deux Poëtes,* appeared in 1837; the second, *Un grand Homme de Province à Paris,* in 1839; and the third, *David Séchard, ou les Souffrances d'un Inventeur,* in *L'Etat* and *Le Parisien-l'Etat* in 1843. In 1843 the third part was published as *Eve et David.* Chapters were suppressed and other changes made, and finally the work was issued as *Illusions Perdues,* consisting of two parts: *The Two Poets* and *Eve and David.* The second part was published as a separate story, *A Distinguished Provincial at Paris,* although it logically occupies a place between *The Two Poets* and *Eve and David,* as it deals with Lucien's life in Paris, when his illusions are lost one by one, as Eve's and David's are in Angoulême. Some of the characters appear in other books. Eve, David, and Madame Chardon occur in *Splendeurs et Misères,* as do also Lucien de Rubempré and Carlos Herrera, who is none other than Jacques Collin *alias* Vautrin, the consummate villain who plays an important part in *Père Goriot.* Balzac particularly admired Eve. He wrote to Madame Hanska: "In *Illusions Perdues* there is a young girl named Eve who is to my eyes the most ravishing creation that I have made." *Illusions Perdues* was dedicated to Victor Hugo.

AT the time this story opens, the Stanhope press and the inking-roller were not in general use in provincial printing establishments. At Angoulême, which was closely connected through its paper-mills with the art of typography in Paris, the only machinery in use was the primitive wooden press. Leather ink-balls were still used; the pressman dabbed the ink on the type by hand; and the bed of the press, being made of marble, deserved its name of "impression stone."

Jerome-Nicholas Séchard, who had been a journeyman pressman, being fifty years old in 1793, escaped the conscription which swept so many French workmen into the army. Séchard was the only employé left in the printing-office; and when the master died Séchard, through luck, got a master-printer's license, although he could neither read nor write. He bought the business, amassed a fortune, and grew more avaricious day by day. He was soon left a widower with one

son, David, whom he treated harshly, made him work at the case on holidays, and finally sent him to Paris to learn the higher branches of typography at Didot's.

David was summoned home in 1819 to take charge of his father's business. The old man was worried because the firm of Cointet Brothers, paper manufacturers of Angoulême, had applied for a printer's license. "I should have gone to the wall," he thought, "but a young fellow from Didot's will pull through." Séchard had a passion for drink, which revealed itself in his huge nose and bloated purple cheeks. His little gray eyes were agleam with the cunning of avarice that extinguished everything else in the man, down to the very instinct of fatherhood. He drove a sharp bargain with David, although the latter was fully aware of the obsolete character of the presses and old-fashioned vignettes, borders and ornamental letters that were the fashion in Angoulême for wedding-cards, calendars, etc. David agreed to a contract of partnership between Séchard senior and son. The good father was to let his house and premises to the new firm for twelve hundred francs a year, reserving one of the two rooms in the attic for himself. So long as David's purchase-money was not paid in full, the profits were to be divided equally.

David now found himself possessor of three bare rooms and a printing-house, without a sou to pay the workmen's wages. His father, even as partner, refused to bear any share in the working expenses. David then questioned his father about the little fortune that his mother left, which was his by right; but the old man gave him no satisfaction. He called David's attention to another treasure that went with the printing-house—Marion, a big country girl who did the cooking, washing, and marketing, dampened and cut the paper, unloaded the paper-carts, collected accounts, and cleaned the ink-balls.

Old Séchard retired to his vineyard at Marsac, four leagues from Angoulême; but often climbed the rocky steps into the city and walked into the office to see how his son was getting on. The old miser scented misfortune in the wind; the name of Cointet Brothers haunted him like a nightmare; for he saw Séchard and Son dropping into the second place. He was

right: disaster was hovering over the house of Séchard. At this period, in order to secure custom, provincial men of business had to profess political opinions; they had to choose between the patronage of the Liberals and that of the Royalists. David was, unfortunately, neutral and indifferent regarding the burning questions of the day. The Cointets set themselves deliberately to assimilate all shades of monarchical opinion, published books of devotion and accused David of Liberalism, Atheism, and what not. David's business began to fall off, while that of the Cointets increased. Finally they bought from David the *Charente Chronicle*, David pledging himself to print no newspaper thenceforward; and this left Séchard and Son only job-printing orders—the death-blow to David's business. The old man took the cash and still charged his son the same rent for the premises. The old foreman, too, went over to the rival establishment. David now ran across an old schoolfellow in direst poverty, Lucien Chardon, the son of a surgeon-major, who had retired from the Republican army and opened a druggist's business in Angoulême. On his death, his wife, a beautiful woman of noble family, sold the shop, and she and her daughter were forced to work for a living. Madame Chardon called herself "Madame Charlotte" and went out as a monthly nurse; and her daughter worked for a laundry. Every cent they could scrape together was bestowed on Lucien, who was their hope and pride. David offered Lucien forty francs a month if he would learn the art of the proofreader, and the two friends now worked together.

David soon caught a glimpse of Lucien's sister, Eve, and loved her. Lucien came to be David's chosen brother; and David outdid the mother and sister in their belief in Lucien's genius. He spoiled Lucien as a mother spoils her child. Lucien thought of a plan that his father had had for employing vegetable fiber in the making of paper, something after the Chinese fashion, and effecting an enormous saving in the cost of raw material.

In May, 1821, David and Lucien were sitting in the yard under the vines behind the dilapidated office. David's physique was the kind that Nature gives to the fighter. He had

strong shoulders, a broad chest, thick, black hair, a swarthy face, and a steady light in his eyes. Lucien was beautiful: he had a Greek profile, golden curls, a white forehead, shapely hands, and a slender, graceful figure. David considered himself the ox and Lucien the eagle. They read, talked, and thought together. David discovered Lucien's passion for Madame de Bargeton, a queen of society in Angoulême, whose salon attracted all the local celebrities. Her name was Marie-Louise-Anaïs de Nègrepelisse, the daughter of a noble long relegated to obscurity. She was now thirty-six, and was burdened with a husband of fifty-eight, who was colorless and uninteresting to the last degree. Among the satellites of her drawing-room was an old Parisian beau, the Baron Sixte du Châtelet, an adept in many graces and accomplishments and something of a diplomat, with ambitions for political advancement. Lucien had attracted Madame de Bargeton's attention and was invited to read some of his poems at one of her evenings. He had fallen in love with this goddess and she flattered and patronized the young poet of twenty. Lucien, at this time, was living with his mother and sister in a few cheap little rooms let to them by Monsieur Postel, who had succeeded to the business of Lucien's father. It required much courage for Madame de Bargeton to introduce the young poet. All the celebrities of Angoulême were present, including the Baron du Châtelet; and Lucien's recitations failed to make the desired impression. He was also ill at ease and unequal to the society into which he was suddenly plunged. Notwithstanding the fact that he was introduced under his mother's noble name, De Rubempré, people soon discovered that he was only the son of a druggist and his mother was a nurse. Tongues wagged freely in the drawing-room, and Lucien was not a success. Madame de Bargeton, however, was more in love with her *protégé* than ever, especially after he had recited his impassioned stanzas entitled *To Her*.

While Lucien was causing this gossip at Madame de Bargeton's, David and Eve took a walk on the banks of the Charente; and, while the soft hues of sunset were glorifying the river and the sweet scent of flowers was perfuming the air, David told his love, which found response in Eve's tender

heart. Their love was the blossom of "two rare natures springing up out of a rich and fruitful soil on foundations of rock." They talked not only of their future life, but of Lucien and his future, his genius, and his connection with Madame de Bargeton. When Eve promised to marry David, he told her, too, of his secret hope of making a fortune out of pulp to supplant rags in the making of paper. He went into the history and details of the manufacture of paper and took his promised bride into his confidence. Old Séchard gave his consent, but nothing more, when David announced his approaching marriage. David prepared the simple rooms for his bride and also a room for Lucien; and, meantime, Angoulême gossiped about Madame de Bargeton and Lucien, and the lady paid the penalty of her sovereignty. Lucien, however, became known as Monsieur de Rubempré, and ceased to be a printer's foreman. He had grown great in his own eyes and looked forward to the day when his historical romance, *An Archer of Charles IX*, and his volume of verses, entitled *Marguerites*, should spread fame throughout the world of literature and bring in enough money to repay his mother, sister, and David for all they had done.

Stanilas de Chandour, husband of the rival queen of Angoulême, calling one day at the Bargetons, found Lucien on his knees in an equivocal position, and he gossiped. Châtelet fanned the flame; and, at length, Madame de Bargeton made her husband behave "like a gentleman of spirit." He had to fight a duel with Monsieur de Chandour! The latter was wounded, and Madame de Bargeton's father, Monsieur de Nègrepelisse, who acted as his son-in-law's second, took him home with him after the duel. Louise de Bargeton sent for Lucien, and announced that she was going to take advantage of the excitement to go to Paris and seek the influence of her cousin, Madame d'Espard, to advance Bargeton. She wanted Lucien to accompany her: he would shine in Paris, his true place: the publishers would welcome such genius as his, and society open its doors. He would meet his Louise near Mansle and they should proceed to Paris, where they would live together. In the midst of his joy, Lucien remembered that his sister was to be married within two days! However, he promised to accom-

pany Madame de Bargeton, and announced the news to David, Eve, and his mother, who burst into tears. Lucien then had to find money for his Paris trip. His devoted mother raised a loan of a thousand francs from Postel for six months, which was indorsed by David; and David added another thousand francs, which he could ill afford. Lucien went away with his limited wardrobe and small package of manuscript. David accompanied the poet as far as Mansle, where he waited for Madame de Bargeton; and, as he saw Lucien drive away in the shabby cabriolet, David had terrible presentiments of the fate awaiting him in Paris. In spite of Madame de Bargeton's precautions, Châtelet discovered that she was leaving Angoulême and sent his man to Ruffec to watch every carriage that changed horses at that stage. "If she is taking her poet with her," he said, "I have her now!"

Lucien went to Paris, and "was drawn into the great machinery of journalism, where he was like to have his honor and his intelligence torn to shreds." David began experiments to discover a cheap method of making paper. The expenses of his marriage and Lucien's journey plunged him into poverty at the outset of married life. He could not bear to tell his wife of his troubles. Soon Postel's bill fell due, and there was no money to meet it. Eve gave up her bridal trinkets and silver, and immediately assumed charge of the printing-office. Cérizet, an apprentice of Didot's, brought by David to Angoulême, was the foreman; Kolb, an Alsatian, also a former porter at Didot's, and now a fairly trained "bear," and the faithful maid of all work, Marion, with whom Kolb was in love, were her aids. While David worked over his invention, Eve printed a *Shepherd's Calendar*, with symbols and pictures in colored inks, and some old legends and broadsides, which made a little money. The treacherous Cérizet got friendly with the Cointet Brothers, who had adopted all David's improvements, and they kept a sharp eye on the clever Madame Séchard. Cérizet, who was now reading proof for the Cointets, saw that Eve distrusted him, and he vowed revenge. When Madame Séchard tried to sell the printing-office, the Cointets saw the advertisement; and, fearing a more dangerous rival, approached the Séchards. They had to accept the terms offered by the

Cointets, and when matters were settled they informed Eve that they meant to make Cérizet lessee of the premises.

A draft of five hundred francs came from Lucien; but they had barely received this before a cruel letter from Lucien told David that he had forged three bills on him, to fall due in three months. Monsieur de Rastignac on a visit to his home set Angoulême gossiping about Lucien. Eve went to him to learn the truth; and young Rastignac told her of Lucien's connection with the actress Coralie, his duel with Michel Chrestien, his treacherous behavior to David d'Arthez, and how he lost his chance to get the patent conferring the right to bear the name and arms of Rubempré, which had actually been made out: "If your brother, Madame," he said, "had been well advised, he would have been on the way to honors, and Madame de Bargeton's husband by this time; but what can you expect? He deserted her and insulted her. She is now Madame la Comtesse Sixte du Châtelet, to her own regret, for she loved Lucien." Eve came away in sorrow. Her tears fell on the child at her breast; and, remembering D'Arthez's address, which Lucien once sent, she wrote to him. D'Arthez's reply gave a full account of Lucien's life in Paris and explained the weakness of Lucien's character and his love of luxury, pleasure, and admiration.

It was now imperative to renew the lease with the Cointets. David, encouraged by his wife, never gave up experimenting with pulp; but the rival firm was determined to probe his secret. Boniface, "the tall Cointet," discovered a young attorney, Pierre Petit-Claud, who knew David. He was a sharp and snappish little fellow, the son of a tailor, and, of course, looked down upon by the society of Angoulême. Cointet dazzled the weedy little lawyer with a proposition of what seemed to him a brilliant marriage, if he would do Cointet's hests. He must go and offer his legal services to David. "The poor devil," said Cointet, "has three thousand francs' worth of bills to meet; he cannot meet them; you will stave off legal proceedings in such a way as to increase the expenses enormously. . . . A word to the wise is sufficient. Now, young man?" An eloquent pause followed, and the two men looked at each other. "We have never seen each other," Cointet resumed, "I have not said a syllable to you; you know nothing

about Monsieur du Hautoy, nor about Madame de Senonches, nor Mademoiselle de la Haye; only, when the time comes, two months hence, you will propose for the young lady. If we should want to see each other, you will come here after dark. Let us have nothing in writing." "Then you mean to ruin Séchard?" asked Petit-Claud. "Not exactly; but he must be in jail for some time." "And what is the object?" "If you have wit enough to find out, you will have sense enough to hold your tongue," was the reply.

The Cointets made use of the complicated machinery of banking to ruin David. The bills that he could not meet traveled to Paris. Lucien became involved, Coralie's establishment was placarded, and a formidable document was sent to the notary at Angoulême, instructing him to prosecute David Séchard with the utmost rigor of the law, for four thousand and eighteen francs and eighty-five centimes. The Séchards sent for Petit-Claud. David walked into his toils and told him that he was on the eve of discovering a sheet of paper without a thread of cotton in it, at a cost of fifty per cent. less than cotton pulp. "There is a fortune in that!" said Petit-Claud; and he now knew what the tall Cointet meant. A sudden spark of generosity flashed through his rancorous soul; he tried to reconcile Séchard's interests with Cointet's schemes, and he tried to give David hints. Eve, in their troubles, went to old Séchard; but she could get no help. Her illusions regarding Lucien had gone. She loved her husband more every day.

Kolb and Marion came forward with their savings; but procedure had begun. David and his wife, by this time, owed ten thousand francs! A letter arrived on September 2d, from Lucien to Eve, announcing the death of Coralie, the beautiful actress with whom he had been living. Old Séchard, who, led on by Petit-Claud, now serving Cointet's interest for his own advancement, refused all aid, even to keep David from imprisonment for debts. The faithful Kolb discovered Cérizet's treachery, as well as the machinations of the other scoundrels, and David's real position became faintly clear. "It is the Cointets' doing!" cried poor Eve, aghast; "they are proceeding against you! That accounts for Métisier's hardness. They are paper-makers. David! they want your secret!"

Kolb advised hiding David, and Eve placed him in a little room with her friend, Basine Clerget, where he could continue his experiments. Once more did David, accompanied by Kolb, try to gain his father's aid, but to no purpose. David now sent Eve some samples of paper. Eve showed them to old Séchard, and he hurried with them to the Cointets. If they had been Jews examining diamonds, their eyes could not have glistened more eagerly over these samples. The Cointets would now pay David's debts, provided he would take them into partnership. "If *I* pay David's debts," thought old Séchard, "he need not share with me! He knows I cheated him on the first partnership and will not try a second. It is my interest to keep him locked up!" Everybody involved thought his own little afterthought. "Experiments must be made before the discovery can take a practical shape, and David Séchard at liberty will slip through our fingers," was the Cointets'; "As soon as I am married, I will slip my neck out of the Cointets' yoke; but till then I must hold on," was Petit-Claud's. Cointet now introduced Petit-Claud to Madame de Senonches, who, on Monsieur de Bargeton's death, had removed to the Hôtel Bargeton, where she was reigning as queen of Angoulême society. Petit-Claud sued for the hand of her daughter, Mademoiselle de la Haye, and was greatly disappointed at the latter's plain appearance. He agreed to the terms, however, and promised to deliver the two Séchards into Cointet's hands.

Lucien, after writing to Eve, decided to return to Angoulême. A market van conveyed him to Longjumeau, and from there he had to tramp. In five days he reached Poitiers, worn and weary. Seeing a traveling-carriage climbing up the hill at night, unnoticed he slipped in among the trunks. The carriage stopped in the morning at Mansle, where eighteen months before he had waited for Madame de Bargeton. As Lucien jumped down, the two travelers alighted. They were the new Prefect of the Charente, Sixte du Châtelet, and his wife, Louise de Nègrepelisse, formerly Madame de Bargeton! Lucien refused their greetings and hurried on, with a distant bow. In a state of exhaustion, he reached the Courtois' mill, between Mansle and Angoulême. The miller fetched the doctor and the *curé* for the supposed dying man; but Lucien revived and begged

for news of his family. When Lucien heard the truth his remorse was terrible. The *curé* carried the news of Lucien to his sister. Early next morning Lucien set out for Angoulême. Eve greeted him with tears and his grieved mother with reproaches and forgiveness; yet neither mother nor sister could put confidence in him—once their pride and hero. Angoulême grew excited at the poet's return. A notice appeared in the paper, and Lucien was invited to dine with the Châtelets. Angoulême also serenaded him. At a reception at the old Bargeton house, Lucien met Louise, now returned a *Parisienne* in dress and manner. Lucien now wrote to Lousteau in Paris for some clothes, which Lousteau sent; and Lucien cut a dash in Angoulême society. Finding out David's hiding-place, he wrote to him, and David persisted in meeting him at any risk.

The generous and noble inventor met the selfish poet, who had helped ruin him, with affection. Lucien managed to get Madame du Châtelet's influence to have David pardoned but it was too late; for Cérizet, who saw David and watched his movements the night he met Lucien, intercepted a letter from Lucien to David and forged a few lines appointing a meeting. David fell into the trap, was seized and carried to prison. Lucien, the unwilling cause of David's arrest, then sneaked away from home, leaving a repentant farewell letter for Eve. On the way to Marsac he turned out of the road to avoid the coach to Paris, and there came across a stranger in clerical dress. His politeness was extreme and he spoke with a Spanish accent. "He looked at Lucien with something of the expression of a hunter that has found his quarry after long and fruitless search." He invited Lucien to take a seat in his private carriage; but first they had a long conversation during which Lucien related his life-history to the Spanish priest, who offered him a place as secretary. He told him he was the Abbé Carlos Herrera, Canon of Toledo, secret envoy from His Majesty Ferdinand VII to His Majesty the King of France. Lucien agreed to be his very creature, if he would give him money enough to save David. The Abbé, drawing forth his purse, brought out the gold.

Eve was in distress, with Lucien gone and David imprisoned. Petit-Claud escorted her to her husband's cell, and the lawyer

discovered Cérizet's forgery, when David showed him the letter that had caused his arrest. Petit-Claud turned this to his advantage; and got control of Cérizet. The Cointets had an interview with David, and a deed of partnership was drawn up by Petit-Claud. David had to purchase his release heavily; but the terms were agreed upon, and, as soon as the deed was signed, Eve, to her surprise, received fifteen thousand francs from Lucien, with a letter, saying that he had sold his life to a Spanish diplomatist. Cérizet bought the old business, and Eve and David purchased a little farm near Marsac, where David pursued his experiments with ardor and succeeded. The Cointets were amassing a fortune out of David's paper, but did not wish him to share in the profits. They raised trouble about some clause in the agreement; and Petit-Claud persuaded them to sell out. Old Séchard died in 1829, leaving valuable property and money besides. David and Eve, with their two sons and a daughter, led a happy life in their country-home. David bade farewell to glory and dabbled in entomology. His discovery was assimilated by the French manufacturing world and revolutionized the paper industry. The Cointets made a fortune and the elder brother became a peer. Petit-Claud attained great success as a lawyer, and "Brave Cérizet," as he was nicknamed by the Liberals, got into political trouble and went to Paris.

CÉSAR BIROTTEAU (1838)

This story bears in the original the title, *Histoire de la grandeur et de la décadence de César Birotteau* ("History of the greatness and of the fall of César Birotteau"). It appeared first in two volumes and was divided into three parts, since reduced to two, and into sixteen chapters, which were afterward suppressed. In this form it was used as a premium by the *Figaro* and the *Estafette*. Another edition was published in 1839, and in 1844 the novel was placed among the *Scènes de la Vie Parisienne* of the *Comedy*, although it had at first been intended for the *Etudes Philosophiques*. Many of its numerous characters are found elsewhere, and the hero himself is mentioned in *Un Ménage de Garçon* and *La Maison du Chat-qui-pelote*.

CÉSAR BIROTTEAU, son of Jacques Birotteau, a peasant of the environs of Chinon, and of the chambermaid of a lady whose vines he tended, went on foot to Paris, when fourteen years old, to seek his fortune. He could read, write, and cipher, and he soon obtained a place as shop-boy with Monsieur and Madame Ragon, perfumers, where he received his board and lodging and six francs a month. He slept on a miserable pallet in the garret, the clerks made fun of him, and his master and mistress spoke to him as if he were a dog. But he devoted himself so assiduously to the business, learning the goods and their marks and prices, that when the terrible conscription of the Year II cleared Citizen Ragon's house of assistants, César was promoted to the place of second clerk with fifty francs a month, and a seat at the table of the Ragons.

Toward the close of the year he was made cashier, on account of his integrity, and Madame Ragon and her husband gradually became intimate with him. In 1794 César had saved two thousand francs in gold; he exchanged them for six thousand francs in paper, purchased state stocks at thirty francs in the hundred, and locked up his certificate with indescribable happiness. Influenced by the Ragons, he became a devoted Royalist and a hater of the Revolution that drove hair-powder

out of fashion. When M. Ragon saw that he was favorably disposed, he appointed him first clerk and initiated him into the secrets of the Queen of Roses, some of whose customers were the most active and devoted emissaries of the Bourbons. With the warmth of youth, César threw himself into the conspiracy of the Royalists and terrorists on the 13th Vendémiaire, and had the honor of contending against Napoleon on the steps of Saint-Roch. Wounded at the outset of the affair, he was borne away by his friends and concealed in the garret of the Queen of Roses, where his wounds were dressed by Madame Ragon and he luckily was forgotten.

On the 18th Brumaire, Monsieur and Madame Ragon, despairing of the royal cause, decided to retire from business, and proposed to sell to Birotteau. César, who at twenty years of age possessed an income of a thousand francs from the public funds, hesitated. His fancy was to retire to Chinon when he had secured an income of fifteen hundred francs, to marry a woman as rich as himself in Touraine, in order to be able to purchase and cultivate the Trésorières, a small estate from which he could easily derive an income of three thousand francs. He was about to refuse, when the sight of a young woman standing at the door of a shop at the corner of the Quai d'Anjou caused him to change his mind. Constance Pillerault was the head shop-girl at the Sailor Boy, a fancy store which displayed a large variety of goods at low prices. Constance was a noted beauty and was in daily receipt of brilliant proposals, in which, however, the subject of marriage was never mentioned; but finally, on the advice of her uncle and guardian, Monsieur Claude-Joseph Pillerault, an ironmonger on the Quai de la Ferraille, she consented to marry César Birotteau. She was then eighteen years old, and possessed eleven thousand francs. César, whose love had inspired him with ambition, purchased the stock of the Queen of Roses, and removed it to a beautiful building near the Place Vendôme. By the advice of Roguin, the notary of the Ragons, who drew up the marriage contract, he did not use the dowry of his wife in the purchase, but kept it as the means wherewith to engage in promising speculations.

Birotteau regarded the notary with admiration, contracted the habit of consulting him, and made him his friend. Madame

César produced a marvelous effect behind the counter, and her famous beauty brought large sales. The "beautiful Madame Birotteau" was all the rage among the elegants of the Empire. But at the end of the year the ambitious César calculated that it would take twenty years to net a hundred thousand francs, at which figure he had fixed the limits of his fortune. Through the aid of the celebrated chemist Vauquelin, he invented a cosmetic which he called "Concentrated Sultana Paste," and a water for the complexion, styled "Carminative Water." These brought in the aggregate enormous profits, which enabled him to build factories in the Faubourg du Temple, and to decorate magnificently the Queen of Roses. In 1810 he was elected Judge of the Tribunal of Commerce. He was considered very rich, and the regularity of his affairs and his habit of owing nothing gave him high credit. He had one daughter, Césarine, idolized by both Constance and himself, on whose education he lavished money without stint.

In 1814 Birotteau took into his house as first clerk a young man of twenty-two, named Ferdinand du Tillet. He was a foundling, the child of a poor girl of Tillet, a small place near the Andelys, who had drowned herself after the birth of her infant in the garden of the curate. He had led a roving life in a world in which he had made up his mind to succeed at any price. Birotteau learned with astonishment that his clerk went out at night elegantly dressed, returned home very late, and attended balls at the houses of bankers and notaries. His habits displeased César, and finally, by the advice of his wife, whom Du Tillet had tried to seduce, his dismissal was resolved upon.

Three days before parting with him, Birotteau, in making up his monthly account one Saturday evening, discovered a deficit of three thousand francs. His consternation was great, but whom should he accuse? The cashier was a nephew of Madame Ragon, named Popinot, a young man of nineteen who lived with them and was integrity itself. On the next Sunday, while the Birotteaus were entertaining friends at cards, Monsieur Roguin put down on the table several antique gold pieces that Madame Birotteau recognized as some she had taken in the shop. Roguin said he had won them at a banker's house of

Du Tillet, who confirmed the notary's story without a blush. That night Du Tillet acknowledged the theft, and César pardoned him; but two weeks later Du Tillet entered the service of a broker, to study banking, he said.

Some months afterward Du Tillet came to César to ask him to become security for him in a certain business transaction. The perfumer, surprised at his effrontery, blushed red as he complied with his request, and gave him a searching look that caused the fellow to vow relentless hatred to him.

The Restoration made an important personage of César, whose zeal in the royal cause was not forgotten, and when the municipal body of Paris was remodeled the prefect wanted him appointed mayor. Thanks to his wife, he accepted the post of deputy, which rendered him less conspicuous and procured him the friendship of the Mayor, Monsieur de la Billardière. It also won him the cross of the Legion of Honor. César, now forty years old, began to have elevated ideas. He had succeeded in everything he had undertaken, and he made up his mind to abandon the shop and ascend to the regions of the upper *bourgeoisie* of Paris.

With this end in view, he embarked, contrary to the advice of his wife and in disregard of her warnings, in a large speculation in lands in the neighborhood of the Madeleine, which he declared were sure to quadruple in value in three or four years. In this scheme, planned by Roguin, the notary, Birotteau was expected to subscribe three hundred thousand francs and represent three eighths of the capital.

"You shall never do it, César, while I am alive!" exclaimed his wife. "We shall soon have nothing left but our eyes to weep with."

"Oh, you don't understand. Chance offers me a career of splendor, and I accept the offer."

Anselme Popinot, Birotteau's cashier, was in love with Césarine. Though he was small, red-haired, and afflicted with a clubfoot, he was capable and honest, and Birotteau had selected him to aid him in his schemes. He had invented a new oil for the hair, made of nut oil, and opened a new establishment for its sale in the Rue des Cinq Diamants, under the name of A. Popinot and Company.

To celebrate properly his decoration with the Legion of Honor, Birotteau determined to give a grand ball. As this necessitated some changes in his house, he employed an architect and gave him *carte blanche* in respect to alterations, additions, and decorations. The magnificence of the projected entertainment was celebrated in the newspapers and commented on in business circles, where the perfumer was censured for his ambition and laughed at for his political pretensions.

Constance, though trembling when she thought of the expense, was so delighted when she saw the result of the architect's work that she fell on her husband's neck and shed tears of happiness, saying, "Ah, César, you make me very wild and very happy."

"So you appreciate me at last," said the perfumer.

The ball was a great success, being attended by many government functionaries and even by several of the nobility. Birotteau, thoroughly intoxicated by the shower of felicitations, took all compliments in earnest, and saw no sarcasm in the remarks of any of his guests.

"You have given a national festivity which does you honor," said Camusot.

"I have rarely seen so fine a ball," said M. de la Billardière.

"What an enchanting spectacle! Are you going to give balls often?" asked Madame Lebas.

The ball at last came to an end, and the weary but happy Birotteaus went to sleep at daylight to dream of the grand entertainment which had cost César, though he was far from suspecting it, hard upon sixty thousand francs. Such was the issue of the fatal red ribbon fastened by a king to a perfumer's buttonhole.

A week after the ball the bills began to come in. Birotteau, who had completely drained himself of ready money in the Madeleine speculation, ordered his cashier to write out notes, payable three months from date. While the larger creditors were paid by notes, small creditors, who expected cash, were put off two or three times. A neighbor, for whom he had discounted notes for five thousand francs, failed, and the notes proved worthless. In trade such matters are whispered about

and are more injurious than a disaster. Birotteau's till was empty. He was frightened; such a thing had never happened in all his business experience. He was afraid of his wife, and to conceal from her his dejection at this simoom of calamities, he went out for a walk. But he met the architect, who held one of his notes.

"I can't get this paper of yours cashed," he said, "though I've tried high and low; so I shall have to ask you to change it for specie. I don't like to peddle your signature about, as it must degrade it; so that it is in your interest to——"

"Sir," said Birotteau, stupefied, "not so loud, if you please, you surprise me strangely."

Presently he met another creditor, who insisted on the immediate payment of his account.

"What does it mean?" said Birotteau to himself. "There's something underneath all this. That cursed ball!"

In the Rue Saint-Honoré he fell in with Alexander Crottat, who expected to succeed Roguin as a notary.

"Ah, sir, one question. Did Roguin hand your four hundred thousand francs to Monsieur Claparon, his business agent?"

"Why do you ask, for mercy's sake?"

"Why do I ask? Because Roguin has made off with them and with Claparon's money, as well as the hundred thousand francs I paid him for the good will of his office, for which I took no receipt. The owners of your lots have not received a single sou on them. Madame Roguin's life is despaired of; Du Tillet watched with her during the night. Roguin has been using his clients' deposits for five years—and for whom, think you? For a woman, la belle Hollandaise! The vicious old blackguard! He advised me three weeks ago not to marry your Césarine, for you would soon be without bread to your mouths, the monster!"

Birotteau stood motionless, petrified. Every sentence was a blow from a sledge-hammer. Crottat, alarmed at his pallor, gave his arm to César, and tried to make him walk, but his legs gave way as if he had been intoxicated. Alexander got him into a carriage and took him home.

"I thought it would be so," said his wife, who had no sus-

picion of the calamity, "he's been working for two months like a galley-slave, as if he still had his bread to earn."

César was put to bed at once, and for three terrible days his reason was in danger, but his peasant constitution came off victorious and he got on his feet again. As soon as he was himself once more, he set about making reparation. "I have been dreaming for twenty-two years," he said, "and I wake again to-day with my staff in my hand."

He handed the cross of the Legion of Honor to his confessor, Abbé Loroax, saying, "You will return it to me when I can wear it without shame." He also sent in his resignation as deputy-mayor. "May God take pity on me!" he said, as he signed his balance sheet.

While he was in the depths of despair, Anselme Popinot, who had always been true to Césarine, asked for her hand. This request brought tears to the eyes of all except César, who arose, took Anselme's hand and said in a hollow voice, "My son, you shall never marry the daughter of a bankrupt."

"Will you promise, sir," said Anselme, "in the presence of your family, to consent to our marriage, if Mademoiselle accepts me for her husband, on the day when your failure shall be redeemed?" Césarine held out her hand to Anselme, who kissed it. "Do you consent, too?" he asked.

"Yes," she replied.

"At last I belong to the family, and have a right to take an interest in its affairs," he said, as he rushed out precipitately.

As soon as Birotteau had turned over everything to his creditors, Madame César obtained for him, through the influence of the Duc de Lenoncourt, a clerkship in the office of the Sinking Fund, worth twenty-five hundred francs a year. A week later Césarine was established in the richest fancy-goods house in Paris, where she received board and lodging and three thousand francs salary, and Madame César went to Popinot's establishment to keep his books and accounts, for which she received also a salary of three thousand francs.

Birotteau's liabilities amounted to four hundred and forty thousand francs, while his assets were two hundred and forty-five thousand francs. As he thus paid his creditors more than fifty per cent., his failure was not disgraceful, as Du Tillet had

hoped it would be. Every creditor, except his former clerk, sincerely pitied him when they saw how regular his books were and how straightforward his business career had been. At the final meeting of his creditors, it was unanimously agreed to remit the remainder of their claims, and Birotteau was discharged by the court a free man. He pressed the Judge's hands with tears in his eyes, and announced that he should work until he had paid his creditors in full.

Eighteen months after the failure, Birotteau was enabled, through his own savings and those of his wife and daughter, with some aid from Uncle Pillerault, to pay his creditors fifty thousand francs. In 1822 Du Tillet, who had bought in Birotteau's claims in the Madeleine lands, which were fast increasing in value, came to Popinot to endeavor to buy a lease of the land on which the latter had built a factory. A canal was projected there, and Du Tillet knew that he could get a large sum for the property if he could buy this lease, which had fifteen years to run. Popinot was ignorant of Du Tillet's theft when a clerk, but he was indignant at seeing him grow rich out of the spoils of his old employer; so when Du Tillet explained the object of his visit, he said, "I want sixty thousand francs for it, and I won't take the fourth part of a sou less."

The discussion over this had waxed warm, when Madame César came in and saw Du Tillet for the first time since the ball.

"This gentleman," said Popinot, "is to get three hundred thousand francs for *your* land, and refuses *us* sixty thousand francs bonus for *our* lease."

"But think," said Du Tillet, with emphasis, "that makes three thousand francs a year."

"Three thousand francs!" repeated Madame César, simply but pointedly.

Du Tillet turned pale, and after a moment of profound silence, said, "Sign this surrender of the lease, and I will give you a check for sixty thousand francs."

Popinot looked at Madame César in amazement, but complied, and received Du Tillet's check for the amount. As soon as the banker was gone, he hastened after Madame César, who had left the apartment, and asked, "What power

is this you have over Du Tillet, to make him conclude such an operation?"

"Oh, let us not speak of that!" she said.

"This sixty thousand francs," continued Popinot, "added to half the profits of our present business—for I have always considered Monsieur Birotteau as my partner—gives us one hundred and thirty-three thousand francs. To this I shall add such sums as may be necessary to make up the amount that is due. Thus, your husband—will be—rehabilitated."

"Rehabilitated!" cried Madame César. "Dear Anselme! my dear boy! Césarine is yours in good earnest." She took his head in her hands and kissed him on the forehead. "Listen," she continued, "I will tell you all. Du Tillet sought to ruin me, my husband was at once informed of it, and Du Tillet was to be discharged. That very day he stole three thousand francs."

"I suspected it," said Popinot.

"Anselme, your happiness requires this avowal; but let it die in your heart, as it is already dead in mine and César's. To avoid a lawsuit and to spare the man, César put three thousand francs into the till to make good the amount—the cost of the cashmere shawl I had to wait three years for."

"Now, I have a little secret," said Popinot. "When your stock in the Queen of Roses was sold, I saddled it with a condition. Your rooms there are precisely as you left them. I kept the second story for myself, and I shall live there with Césarine, who will thus never leave you. In order to restore you your fortune, I will buy out Monsieur César's interest for one hundred thousand francs, so that you will have, with his clerkship, ten thousand francs a year."

"Say no more, Anselme, or I shall lose my senses."

This was a joyful day for César. The King's private secretary, the Viscount de Vandenesse, came to see him and said:

"Monsieur Birotteau, your efforts to pay your creditors have come to the knowledge of the King. His Majesty, touched by an act so rare, and knowing that, from humility, you do not wear the cross of the Legion of Honor, has sent me to request you to resume the emblem. He has also commissioned me to

hand you this sum of six thousand francs from his privy purse, regretting that he cannot do more. Let this remain a profound secret."

On the day of his rehabilitation, César went to the court surrounded by friends. He listened to the discourse of the Attorney-General, who, in reciting the history of his case, took the occasion to pay him the highest compliments; and he was nearly overcome when the solemn decree of the court was pronounced by the First President. Uncle Pillerault took him by the hand and led him from the hall, while César mechanically attached the ribbon of the Legion of Honor to his buttonhole, as he was carried in triumph to his carriage.

"Where are you taking me, my friends?" he asked.

"To your own house."

"No, I wish to go to the Exchange, and profit by my right."

"Drive to the Exchange," said Pillerault, who observed with anxiety certain threatening symptoms, and feared César might go mad.

At the Exchange, whose threshold no bankrupt can cross, Birotteau was received with the most flattering attentions, even Du Tillet coming to congratulate him. After this triumph, César set out to return to his house, where the marriage contract between Césarine and Popinot was to be signed. Popinot had prepared for him a surprise and, with the connivance of Constance and Césarine, had sent out invitations for a ball to commemorate the signing of the contract. Everything in the rooms in the Rue Saint-Honoré was precisely as César had left them, and when he was taken there, and saw at the foot of the staircase his wife, in the cherry-colored gown she had worn at the previous ball, with Césarine, the Count de Fontaine, the Viscount de Vandenesse, the illustrious Vauquelin, and others, to welcome him, a veil seemed spread before his eyes, and his Uncle Pillerault, who supported him on his arm, felt a slight shudder.

César took his wife's arm and whispered in a choking voice, "I am not well."

Constance, alarmed, led him to his chamber, where he dropped into his armchair, saying, "Monsieur Loraux!"

The Abbé came, followed by many of the guests, who formed

a terrified group. César pressed the hand of his confessor and bowed his head upon the bosom of his kneeling wife. A blood-vessel had burst in his chest, and an aneurism stifled his last breath.

"Behold the death of the just," said the Abbé in a deep voice.

BEATRIX (1839)

In this novel Balzac presents thinly disguised character studies of certain of his famous contemporaries. Beatrix is the Comtesse d'Agoult (1805–1876), an author who wrote under the pen-name of "Daniel Stern," and who lived ten years (from 1835 to 1845) with Franz Liszt, the Hungarian pianist and composer (1811–1886). To them were born three daughters, one of whom married Von Bülow, and afterward Richard Wagner. Liszt is represented in the novel as Conti. The rival of Beatrix, Camille Maupin, or Mademoiselle des Touches, is a composite study of two characters in real life: the Baroness Dudevant (1804–1876), the famous novelist known by her pseudonym of "George Sand"; and Madame de Staël (1766–1817). It is said that Madame Dudevant was immensely pleased with the story because it represented her in favorable contrast to her "friend" and fellow-author, the Comtesse d'Agoult. The lover of Mademoiselle des Touches, Claude Vignon, stands for the critic Gustave Planche, although it was with Alfred de Musset (1810–1857), the poet, and Frederic François Chopin (1809–1849), the musician, that the Baroness Dudevant had her most noted *liaisons*.

ARON DU GUÉNIC, of Guérande, was a true Breton. When La Vendée arose against the French Republic, he joined with the Royalists in their guerrilla warfare, and when the insurrection was put down, in 1802, he sailed for Ireland rather than accept the clemency of Napoleon.

Here, in 1813, at the age of fifty, he married Miss Fanny O'Brien, a young lady of ancient family, dowered with beauty, amiability, and good sense in lieu of fortune. In 1814, on the restoration of the Bourbons to the French throne in the person of Louis XVIII, the Guénics returned to their Breton home, bringing their newborn son, Calyste (Calixtus) by name.

No other children were born to the couple, and Calyste was the idol of the household. By the time the son had arrived at the age of manhood, though not its appearance—having inherited from his Irish mother soft, fair hair, a rosebud mouth, delicate complexion, and finely molded features, though deriving from his father a swordlike strength and elasticity of nerve and muscle—the Baron du Guénic was a broken old man whose sole reason for clinging to life was that he might

see his son married and the father of a boy that would preserve the family from extinction. "I do not want to go out of this world," he said, "without seeing my grandson, a little pink-and-white Guénic, with a Breton hood on in his cradle."

Accordingly, in the year 1836, when Calyste was twenty-two, a council of all the Du Guénic clan was held, at which a wife for the young man was decided upon in the person of Charlotte de Kergarouët, a young girl of a family of prominence in the neighboring city of Nantes. Calyste hotly rebelled when informed of the disposition made of his future by the family council. "I! marry at my age?" he cried to the Baroness de Guénic with one of those looks which weaken a mother's resolution. "Am I to have no period of sweet love-madness? May I never know the beauty that is free, the fancy of the soul, the despair of attainment, the thrill of conquest? Shall I never climb to my beloved's chamber by a rotten trellis, without knowing or caring that it is breaking behind me at every upward step? Can I know nothing of woman but wifely surrender, or of the light of love but the chastened glow of the marriage-lamp? Is all my curiosity to be satiated before it is excited? Am I to live without ever feeling that fury of the heart which adds to a man's power? Do you not perceive that by following the stupid custom of the country you have fed the fire that is consuming me, and that I shall be burned up before that divinity reveals herself to me in flesh and blood whose presaging image I see wherever I turn—in the green-scarfed limbs of the waving forest, the white breasts of the foaming surge, the soft radiance of moonlight glinting from the darkling lake? Shall I never pluck the blue blossom of romance? Mother, but one such flower of womankind blooms in all Guérande, and that is you. It must be in Paris, in the conservatories of Paris, that my heart-ease is to be found. It was from Paris she came, that glorious creature I saw on the moors amid the yellow broom, whose beauty sent the blood with a rush to the heart!"

"Oh, my dear boy!" said the melting mother, pressing his head to her bosom and kissing his fair hair, still all her own, "marry when you please, only be happy. It is not my part to torment you. Only—tell your mother about this woman you met on the moors."

It was indeed a glorious creature that Calyste had beheld amid the golden broom. Félicité des Touches was one of the score of women who, in the history of the world, have achieved greatness measured by the standards applied to the greatest of men. Demanding such a judgment, as it were, she early assumed a masculine appellation—Camille Maupin—and speedily made it shine among the foremost names in contemporary literature.

Occupied with her labors and studies, Mademoiselle des Touches had passed the age when girls of her class usually, if ever, marry. She was now forty, with the same beauty of form and face that she possessed at twenty-five, and more magnetic than ever in her attractiveness, owing to her ever-increasing insight into the minds and soul of her associates, and her ever-broadening sympathy with human passions and impulses, however weak and wayward these might seem in the eyes of the world.

Disliking to think that she might be abnormal in regard to her feelings toward the other sex, Mademoiselle des Touches, when she had passed the age of impressionable girlhood, sought a lover among men of genius in her own circle. She first selected an author, who was deeply versed in art, a subject in which she felt herself deficient, and who seemed to share in her desire for ennobling companionship. Together they went to Italy, where, after revealing to her the souls of the Old Masters, he finally laid bare his own—suddenly deserting her for an Italian woman of purely sensual charms. But for this humiliation Mademoiselle des Touches might never have become famous. It gave her at once and forever that scorn of mankind which was her great strength. The old Félicité was dead and "Camille Maupin" was born.

She returned to Paris in the company of Conti, the great musician, for whom she wrote the libretti of two operas. Upon the author who had deserted her she revenged herself by writing a delicious comedy on the subject of their Platonic relations.

Conti she found going the way of her first lover, and so broke with him in time—even before he realized whither he was drifting. At the time when this story opens she had become interested in Claude Vignon, a lazy, impoverished bohemian,

who nevertheless was receiving from more successful men the sincere homage of fear and hatred because of his mordant criticism. Félicité chose him, evidently, in order to maintain and advance her position in the literary world. To escape criticism for this behavior, so rash and incomprehensible as it seemed to her friends, she carried him off to her "Chartreuse" in Brittany.

But in this beautiful château, filled though it was with the treasures of art and literature purchased with the rich gains of his mistress's pen, Vignon, a true cockney, soon became bored, and grew homesick for his beloved Paris. Here in Brittany was no artist to be plucked, no poet to be driven to despair. The varied scenery of the surrounding country pleased him even less than the château. So he moped within doors while Camille tramped the moors and the sand-dunes, planning how she might mold him to her purposes.

On one of these excursions she came upon Calyste lying on his back in the heather, observing in the clouds the symbols of his ideal woman. To Camille his fair flushed face and lithe form, as he sprang to his feet, seemed the impersonation of a faun, one of the ever-young and beautiful creatures of classic myth. All the immortal in her leaped forth responsive, and to him her five feet of stature towered to regal proportions, and her dark face became radiant with inner light.

"I am Félicité des Touches," she said; and he: "I am Calyste du Guénic, of Guérande."

"Our estates join on this moor where no boundary is visible. Let us clasp hands in a friendship that shall know no barriers. Come and see me, Calyste, when it pleases you, as if we had always known each other."

A few days after Calyste's understanding with his mother, Charlotte, the bride that had been selected for him without his consent, came to visit Guérande, accompanied by her mother, the Viscountess Kergarouët. By the connivance of the Baroness du Guénic, Calyste, after a formal welcome of the visitors, slipped away to Les Touches. Camille, in despair over Vignon's moodiness, greeted the boy with joy.

"Perhaps you can aid me with our homesick Parisian," she said. "I have set out to galvanize his withered heart, to save him from himself, to attach him to me, but I despair of succeeding. My love is not passionate enough, perhaps. I cannot intoxicate him into forgetfulness of his grudge against the world. You and he must get drunk together. It may make a man of him."

Calyste turned as red as a cherry.

"Good God!" exclaimed Camille, "here am I thoughtlessly depraving your maiden innocence! Forgive me, Calyste! When you love, you will know that you would sacrifice all other persons in the world to attain the smallest of your purposes with the object of your passion. Only a mother's affection can compare with it. Oh, how I envy your mother! To have a Calyste of my own! What bliss! And you shall be my son. I will give up my romantic aspirations, unfitting my age, for the joys of motherhood, the cares of which I have not borne. I shall leave you my fortune."

"I can give you nothing in return," replied the young man, "and so shall return your fortune to your heirs."

"Child!" said Camille, in her rich tones, now trembling with emotion, "can nothing save me from myself? But I must do something for you; what shall it be?"

"Give me the chance to love!" cried Calyste, passionately; "to love where I may give of myself something in measure to what I shall receive. I dare not hope that you, so far above me, so rich in thoughts and emotions that overwhelm me with their abundance, and daze me with their mystery, shall be the beloved one. Oh, sun of womankind, are there not planets that revolve about you upon whom I may dare to gaze? I am not clever, like Monsieur Vignon, yet such a love as I desire would make me so. Then perhaps——"

"Then I should be below the horizon, and the new star exalted to the zenith. Yes, I know the woman for you, and I shall bring her here, that you may win her. I have already endowed her with a lover—Conti, the musician, who for a time was my satellite. It will be a pleasure to revenge myself on the man who so willingly permitted the transfer, by seeing him supplanted in turn. Beatrix de Casteran, Marquise de Roche-

fide (for she has a husband whom she deserted for Conti), is a woman with a wonderful gift of apprehending everything. Hers is the beauty of the pure white rose that still can flush, oh, so delicately! in response to the warmth of adoration. Your cheek is already glowing, boy, with my description, and I know hers must be tinged in subtle sympathy, distant as she is. Are you never so bashful, she will divine your feelings toward her. Nature formed her kind to be the first love of maiden youths, although not always the last. I shall send for Beatrix at once."

Within a week young Guénic, who was hard put to it to conceal his disgust at the countrified airs of his *fiancée*, with whom previously he had been delighted to romp, was overjoyed to receive a note from Les Touches, saying:

"My dear Calyste:—The fair Marquise has arrived. The honor of Brittany and of the Guénics is at stake when there is a Casteran to be welcomed. So let us meet soon.

"Camille Maupin."

That afternoon the young Breton walked over to Les Touches surrounded by a halo of hope through which he beheld all nature in a glow, revealing herself to him, as constantly of late, in feminine attributes. He found the whole party in the drawing-room. It was six o'clock, and the room was full of the soft gloom that women, especially those who have passed their youth, love so well. Lifting up the tapestry that curtained the door, Calyste stood for a moment surrounded by the red rays of the level sun. "Young Apollo!" he heard ejaculated in a low tone, and then, becoming used to the gloom, he saw, reclining on the divan, a white, sinuous figure, whose eyes were fixed upon him in frank admiration. In an instant the young man was possessed by a passion that filled to the full the wild longings of the past month. Lionlike he looked about to see who might dispute his right to the love that had come upon him. He saw by the side of the woman of his desire a man with a head like Lord Byron's, that he held even more proudly than was the wont of the defiant poet. Calyste divined at once that this was Conti, the musician, and cast at him a

glance of challenge, a feeling he had never had for Claude Vignon. However, the well-bred man of the world did not appear to notice it.

As soon as possible Camille took the young man aside and said to him:

"My dear boy, if the Marquise falls in love with you she will pitch Conti out of the window; but you are behaving in such a way as to tighten their bonds. Command yourself."

Later in the evening, urged by Vignon, Conti and Camille sang together, among other duets the final one of Zingarelli's *Romeo e Giulietta*, which expresses the extreme of passion. Calyste was overwhelmed by Conti's genius. In spite of what Camille had told him of the man's selfish, even groveling character, the youth believed at this moment that the singer must have a beautiful soul. How was he to contend against such an artist? His heart was filled with despair. He stole from the music-room and cast himself down upon the divan where he had first seen Beatrix. Exhausted with emotion, he fell into a stupor from which he was aroused by the voices of Camille Maupin and Claude Vignon, conversing in low tones in the dark. Evidently it was late and all the rest of the party had retired.

The critic, the practised dissecter of souls, was laying bare to Camille secrets of her heart of which she herself was unconscious: "You are a coward, Camille; you love Calyste, and dare not confess it to yourself. You were appalled at the consequences of such a passion at your age. So you have hurled the boy at the head of another woman, and forced yourself to accept me as his substitute—me of all men to attempt to deceive! And I must confess that for a time you succeeded in befooling me. I had hoped for a union of spirit with you, that we might soar together into the realm of infinitude. You were there, already, needing not my aid or company. And so I was deceived.

"To-morrow I go back in this misery of loneliness to the vast prison of Paris. You will remain here equally desolate. God pity us both, Camille!"

At this moment Calyste rose from the couch: "I ought to let you know that I am here," he said.

However much Calyste was affected at first by the self-sacrifice of Camille, his overwhelming passion for Beatrix soon swept from his mind all consideration of his accomplice's feelings, and the plot against the Marquise and Conti advanced apace. The young man promised blind obedience to his mentor's orders. These were to avoid the Marquise as much as possible, eluding particularly her questioning, and to pay assiduous court to Camille. "In a week," said this wily woman, "Beatrix will be crazy about you."

To the Marquise Camille made open confession of her love for her handsome young countryman, and, acknowledging his infatuation for Beatrix, threw herself on the Marquise's mercy. "Such is Calyste's humility that your disdain will preserve him to me. And I cannot bear to lose him. If I do, my determination is fixed."

"And what have you determined?" asked Beatrix, with an eagerness that, while a confirmation of Camille's view of the Marquise's character, was yet a shock to her sentiments of friendship.

"Happily," answered the elder woman, "there is no need to answer that question. I know how to win."

"And that?" queried Beatrix.

"Is my secret, my dear," answered Camille.

By Camille's contrivance, Conti was suddenly recalled to Paris, and Beatrix was left alone without a cavalier. By the end of the week the Marquise was crazy—if not with love, with the passion to possess the beloved of another that with many women supplies the place of love. Camille arranged a walking-party to the rocky shore of the Breton coast, and for the first time permitted Calyste and Beatrix to stray off together. Reaching the top of a high cliff, at the foot of which the wild sea tumbled its surges, the young lover, no longer able to restrain his passion, declared his love in the poetic similitudes to which his solitary communings with nature inclined him:

"My love for you is like yon deep and tumultuous sea," he said. "Surging in my heart before I saw you, like those billows rolling in from the infinite distance, it has at last found its predestined goal——"

"In a rock-bound coast," completed Beatrix. "Calyste, I

must be adamant to you. I love you, but I will not sacrifice my friend. Camille it is, who, like the moon to the tide, is the source of your agitation."

"Then your love is not like mine," said the ardent youth. "For you I would sacrifice my friends, my family, my name, my future life."

"Be silent!" said Beatrix, satisfied with her conquest, and thoroughly alarmed by his impetuosity. "I have done wrong enough. I forbid you to speak to me again of these matters."

"You will never be mine?" he asked, in a voice choked by a storm in his blood.

"Never, my dear; to you I can be only Beatrix—a dream."

"And you will return to Conti?"

"There is no help for it."

"Then you shall never more be any man's," cried Calyste, hurling her over the precipice.

From a cleft in the rock protruded a box-tree, in which the falling woman lodged. Hardly had she reached it, when the repentant youth had followed her, slipping down the almost perpendicular side of the cliff. Beatrix was unconscious. Gathering her in his arms, as they lay in that aerial bed, Calyste implored her to open her eyes, to forgive him. Her lips quivered before her eyelids moved. Suddenly he found himself kissed with a passion more fervent than he had ever imagined in his wildest dream.

Camille, walking on the shore below, had been a spectator of this scene. Taking a coil of rope from a boat drawn up on the beach, she leaped like an Amazon (for she wore Turkish trousers) up the less precipitous slope of the cliff and was soon at its summit. First she drew up the light and agile Calyste, and then by his help rescued the Marquise.

To melt, to vitrify flinty hearts, a thunderbolt is needed. On Beatrix this thunderbolt had fallen in Calyste's passion and his attempt on her life. She now looked at love on its loftiest side. She saw herself in Calyste's eyes the supreme woman. "Dear boy," she said to him, "the love I have been so happy to inspire you with has elevated me in my own eyes. If ever you desire to throw me down from this moral height, do not repent your resolution; after your love, death!"

Then, even as she was saying these tender words, while she and Calyste were walking one evening through the garden of Les Touches, with arms encircling each other, they came upon Camille and Conti, seated on a bench, talking in low tones with heads close together. Conti sprang to his feet laughing. "You did not expect me back from Paris so soon, I suppose. Thank you, Monsieur du Guénic, for so satisfactorily filling my place." And, placing his arm around the waist from which Calyste's had just dropped in confusion, he walked away with Beatrix, continuing his laughter.

"He is mocking her!" cried Calyste to Camille, vehemently.

"Keep calm," said Camille, "or you will lose the few chances that remain. If he wounds Beatrix's vanity too much, she will trample him under foot like a worm. But he is astute. He will no doubt speak of you as a boy bewitched by the notion of ruling the destinies of two famous women. Beatrix, unable to admit me as a rival, will entangle herself in false denials, and he will come away master of the situation."

"Oh, why did he return?" moaned the heart-broken youth. "One day more, and we should have been safely on our way to Ireland! What brought him back?"

"The failure of his opera, and the taunt of Vignon that it was hard to lose both reputation and mistress," said Camille.

That evening Beatrix sought Camille in her chamber. "I am lost!" she cried. "The convict in the galleys is at the mercy of the man he is chained to. I must go back to the hulks of love! At last I recognize your infernal plotting. It was you who brought Conti back!"

The Marquise's features were distorted with rage, while Camille tried to conceal her triumph under an expression of regret.

"I leave you Calyste," said Beatrix, piercing beneath her rival's mask, "but I am fixed forever in his heart."

Camille retorted by quoting the famous speech of Mazarin's niece to Louis XIV: "You reign, you love him, and you are going."

In the meantime, the musician, left alone with Calyste, was playing with the young Breton.

"I foresaw that you would love Beatrix; I left her in a

situation in which she must needs flirt with you without abdicating her sacred majesty, were it only to annoy her dear friend Camille Maupin. Well, my dear fellow, love her. You will be doing me a service. I am at this moment in love with my newest singer, Mademoiselle Falcon. When you come to Paris you will say I have exchanged a marquise for a queen!"

Joy shed its glory on Calyste's face. This was all that Conti wanted.

Returning homeward the young lover trod on air. By the time he had reached Guérande, Conti and the Marquise were on their way to Paris.

The next day Calyste set out early for Les Touches. Camille met him at the gate.

"Gone!" she exclaimed.

"Beatrix?" cried Calyste, stunned.

"You were duped by Conti. You told me nothing; I could do nothing."

In her wisdom Camille knew it was useless to talk of Beatrix's unworthiness to the heart-broken young man. He alarmed her by the calmness of his despair. He asked to see Beatrix's room. Hiding his face in the pillow where her head had rested, to Camille's great relief he burst into a torrent of tears.

Returning home, he found the family and their guests playing cards. Having heard of the departure of the woman with whom he was infatuated, each of them watched him by stealth, and all but his mother observed with gratification his calmness. She alone suspected what the death of a first love must be to a heart so true and artless.

Taking her aside, "Mother," he said, "another has plucked my flower of romance. Tell them I will marry whom and when they please."

A DISTINGUISHED PROVINCIAL AT PARIS (1839)

This work originally formed the second part of *Illusions Perdues* ("Lost Illusions"), and two chapters first appeared in the *Estafette*, in 1839. It is included in the *Scènes de la Vie de Province*. Many of the characters appear in other works. Etienne Lousteau is supposed to be a portrait of the critic, Jules Janin. In 1839 Balzac wrote to Madame Hanska: "You will read the *Grand Homme*, a work full of *verve*, in which you will once more encounter Florine, Nathan, Lousteau, Blondet, Finot, those 'great personages' of my work, as you have the kindness to call them. But what will recommend this book to the attention of strangers is the audacious painting of the inner life of Parisian journalism—which is of terrifying exactitude. I alone was in a position to tell our journalists the truth, and to make war upon them *à l'outrance*." The *Grand Homme de Province* stirred up a great deal of trouble for the realistic author.

LUCIEN CHARDON, traveling post with his inamorata for the first time in his life, was horrified to see nearly the whole sum he meant to live on for a year in Paris used up on the road. He made a great mistake in expressing surprise at the new and wonderful things he saw. Many a woman likes to see the god in her idol and cannot forgive any childishness; and Madame de Bargeton's love was grafted on pride—a fact that Lucien had not yet guessed. Instead of keeping himself to himself, he indulged in the playfulness of a young rat emerging from his hole for the first time. The travelers were set down at the sign of the Gaillard-Bois in the Rue de l'Echelle, at daybreak. They did not see each other till four o'clock. Lucien noticed an unaccountable change in his Louise. A change had indeed taken place. While Lucien slept, she had received a call from Monsieur du Châtelet, who had followed her to Paris; and he told her if she wanted the influence of Madame d'Espard she must not live in the same house with Lucien. The Baron offered to find suitable lodgings for her that evening. She agreed; and the elderly dandy, perfectly familiar with Parisian ways and faultlessly dressed, formed a

striking contrast to the half-awakened, hastily dressed Lucien, in his last year's nankeen trousers and shabby, tight jacket. After dinner Louise told her young lover, Lucien, of the new arrangement; and two hours later she was installed in the Rue Neuve de Luxembourg. The Baron called and impressed the provincial lady still more. The next day Lucien rambled about the streets and called to see Louise. He found the Baron there, who took them to dinner at the *Rocher de Cancale* and afterward to the Vaudeville.

That evening marked an epoch in Lucien's career; he bade farewell to many of his provincial ideas; his horizon widened and society assumed different proportions. He looked around at the fair Parisiennes in their beautiful toilets, and thought that the once peerless Louise seemed rather dowdy. The arrangement of her hair, too, so bewitching in Angoulême, was simply frightful in Paris. Madame de Bargeton thought her poet cut a "positively pitiable" figure, as she compared him with the correct young dandies in the balcony. His sleeves were too short; his country gloves ill-cut; and his waistcoat was too tight—indeed, he looked "prodigiously ridiculous." In these lovers a process of disenchantment was at work; Paris was the cause. The next evening, Madame de Bargeton, who was spending the day with Madame d'Espard, invited Lucien to join them at the Opera. Lucien spent the afternoon in the Garden of the Tuileries, where he noted the well-dressed youths and men of fashion. A cold sweat broke out over him as he compared his appearance with theirs, and thought of the clothes he must wear at the Opera. He noted also the famous Mademoiselle des Touches, Madame Firmiani, and other celebrities. Compared with these queens, Louise was an old woman. After dining at Véry's (he could have lived a month in Angoulême on the price of that dinner), he rushed to his inn, got a hundred crowns, and returned to the Palais-Royal, where he made the necessary purchases for his evening outfit, and then inquired for a hair-dresser. The Marquise invited Monsieur de Rubempré to take a front seat in her box, which was conspicuously situated. Louise de Nègrepelisse looked the same as on the previous night—tall, lean, withered, angular, affected in manner, provincial and pompous in her speech, and dowdily dressed.

Lucien felt ashamed to have fallen in love with "this cuttlefish bone." He, on his part, was ill at ease, and his manners astonished the Marquise. The social celebrities stared hard at Madame d'Espard's two country guests, and Rastignac and Châtelet, who were in the audience, pulled the feathers off M. de Rubempré, and said that his name was really Chardon, and that he was an apothecary's son. Madame d'Espard and Louise, not willing to stand the ridicule, left the Opera; and the doors of the Marquise's house were closed to M. de Rubempré.

The next time Lucien saw these ladies they were driving in the Bois; and they cut him dead. By this time, Madame de Bargeton had become quite Parisian in appearance, under the Marquise's guidance. Lucien removed to a cheap room in the Latin Quarter, and wrote a rhetorical epistle to Louise and another to his sister Eve, who had just married David Séchard, the Angoulême printer. Dining at the famous Flicoteaux's restaurant, he came across a young man, Etienne Lousteau, who, like Lucien, had come to Paris from the provinces to win fame and money through literature. An experience of two years and some fame as a journalist—he wrote book reviews and dramatic criticisms—made him a hero in Lucien's eyes. Lucien spent his mornings studying at the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève; strolled in the Luxembourg Gardens; dined at Flicoteaux's; and went to the theater at night. He now began his rounds with his two manuscripts. The conversations that he overheard while waiting to see the heads of firms destroyed more illusions. He was astonished to discover that publishers regarded books "as merchandise to be sold dear and bought cheap"; that they drove sharp bargains; and that there was a great deal of chicanery in the business. Lucien left his *Archer of Charles IX* with "Old Doguereau," as he was familiarly called, who took his address, and said he would call. Doguereau liked the book, and had made up his mind to buy it for a thousand francs. But when he climbed the stairs, and saw the forlorn room, "the destitution of genius made an impression on Daddy Doguereau."

"Let him preserve these simple habits of life, this frugality, these modest requirements," thought he. Aloud he said: "It is a pleasure to me to see you. Thus, sir, lived Jean-Jacques,

whom you resemble in more ways than one. Amid such surroundings the fire of genius shines brightly; good work is done in such rooms as these." Thereupon, he offered Lucien four hundred francs for his book. Lucien declined. In his disappointment, he met a fellow-worker that afternoon, coming out of the library. They had seen each other here and at Flicoteaux's. They spoke. Lucien told his troubles, and, in exchange, received a longer story of hard experiences from the talented Daniel d'Arthez, who invited him to call and show him his manuscript. Lucien did so that evening, and found his new friend in a poor room. D'Arthez read and criticized the historical romance, and told Lucien that he earned a scanty living by writing for encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc., while he studied philosophy and literature. His friends were all earnest students—young naturalists, doctors, artists, and writers. Lucien was soon invited to join this "*cénacle* of lofty thinkers," who often met in D'Arthez's room. Horace Bianchon, Léon Giraud, Joseph Bridau, Fulgence Ridal, and Michel Chrestien made an oasis for Lucien in the Rue des Quatre-Vents. They lent him money, and, better still, gave him faithful friendship. Chrestien's advice was: "Carry all the cravings of imagination into the world of vanity."

Lucien insisted that he could not bear the burden of Parisian life. "I cannot struggle bravely," he said.

"We will stand by you," said D'Arthez; "it is just in these ways that a faithful friendship is of use."

"Stick by us," said Bianchon, "bear up bravely and trust in hard work."

"But what is hardship for you is death for me," Lucien put in quickly.

"Before the cock crows thrice," smiled Léon Giraud, "this man will betray the cause of work for an idle life and the vices of Paris."

These friends begged him not to go into journalism. They said it was "an inferno, a bottomless pit of iniquity and treachery and lies, which no one can traverse undefiled, unless, like Dante, he is protected by Virgil's sacred laurel."

Lucien would not listen; and, having tried the publishers, he now tried the newspapers. He had his first shock at the

Solitaire, where he got an insight into the ways of dealing with subscribers. Then he ran across Lousteau, and talked over the question of journalism with him. He also read to him some of his sonnets from *The Marguerites: Easter Daisies*, *The Marguerite*, *The Camellia*, and *The Tulip* (the latter admired by the *cénacle*). Lousteau told him that poetry meant starvation; and then he enlightened him with regard to the universal corruption in the world of journalism and literature. "It is always the same story," he said; "year after year the same rush from the provinces to Paris; but one by one they drop, some into the trench where failures lie, some into the mire of journalism, some again into the quagmires of the book-trade."

Lucien had made up his mind. He agreed to call for Lousteau, dine with him at Dauriat's, be introduced to several journalists, attend a first night at the Panorama-Dramatique, and have supper with Lousteau's mistress, Florine, where he would meet Finot, editor and proprietor of Lousteau's paper. The atmosphere of Lousteau's room was a great contrast to that of D'Arthez. Before going out, Lousteau had to get some money from an old pawnbroker and bookseller, Barbet, who called and took away some of the books sent for review. Lousteau then told Lucien how book-reviews were written without the writer seeing the books. Lousteau paid the cabman three francs (which astounded the provincial poet), when they got out at the "Wooden Galleries," where "fashionable literature, as it is called, used to reign in state."

The Wooden Galleries of the Palais-Royal were, at this period, one of the sights of Paris. Here were shops full of striking articles; booksellers, tailors, and milliners were side by side; and ventriloquists and charlatans, performing dogs and automatic chess-players plied their queer trades in a jumble with florists and fruiterers. Women of the town, too, made a promenade of this place. Lucien was dazzled and thunderstruck at the book-talk between Lousteau, Dauriat, and Finot, regarding the sales of poetry. Lousteau shrunk somewhat in Lucien's eyes. The most important man in Paris was undoubtedly the fashionable bookseller, by whom all great literary men lived. Lucien halted no longer between the resignation

preached by the brotherhood in the Latin Quarter and Lousteau's militant doctrine.

He was impressed with the power of the press when he entered the Panorama-Dramatique with Lousteau. He went with him behind the scenes, and saw all the curious life and manners there. He was introduced to Monsieur Raoul Nathan, a critic, Vernou, Finot, and several actresses, including Florine and Coralie. Matifat, a wealthy chemist, was in her dressing-room. Coralie also had an admirer, a rich silk-mercer named Camusot. Lucien had gone from surprise to surprise. For two months he had seen literature in poverty and want in the Latin Quarter; he had seen literature at its cynical worst in Lousteau's rooms; and he had seen literature abject and literature insolent in the Wooden Galleries. Now he was to undergo his initiation into the intrigues of actors, critics, journalists, and playwrights, as well as the dissipated, frivolous life of the votaries of the footlights. The beautiful Jewess, Coralie, with her oval and ivory-tinted face, pomegranate lips, ebony hair, and jet-black, long-lashed eyes, lost her heart. Lousteau told this to Lucien during the play. Lucien told Lousteau about his love-affair with Madame de Bargeton and his enmity to the Baron du Châtelet.

"Very good!" said Lousteau, "we want a *bête noire* for our newspaper; we will take him up. Finot is short of copy. You can do the play, and I will get out three columns about the elderly buck and your disdainful lady."

"So this is how a newspaper is written!" said Lucien. After the play they went to Florine's luxurious rooms, provided by Matifat. Lucien retired to her pretty boudoir, and, by the light of the pink candles, wrote his first newspaper article on the first performance of the *Alcalde in a Fix*, an imbroglio in three acts—first appearance of Mademoiselle Florine and Mademoiselle Coralie. At the same time Lousteau wrote *The Elderly Beau*, and hit off the Baron du Châtelet and "the cuttlefish bone." That evening Lucien saw the very heart's core of cankerous Paris; but, so far from shuddering at the sight, he was intoxicated with the enjoyment of the intellectual and stimulating society in which he found himself. The extraordinary men, clad in armor damascened by their vices, these

intellects environed by cold and bitter analysis, seemed far greater in his eyes than the grave and earnest members of the brotherhood. Besides all this he was reveling in his first taste of luxury; for the first time in his life he tasted delicious wines and saw cookery carried to the pitch of a fine art. A minister and a duke were present, and amid the fragrance of wine, steaming dishes, and bright candles was the loveliest actress in Paris—the beautiful Coralie, made happy by a few words of his!

Lucien, unaccustomed to orgies of this kind, succumbed, and was taken by Coralie to her home in the Rue de Vendôme, where she and her servant, Bérénice, put him to bed. Lucien now made his home with Coralie in the luxurious apartments provided by Camusot. His review made a great success. Daniel d'Arthez, too, saw it, and wrote him a letter full of congratulation and regrets. He saw the road on which Lucien had begun to travel.

Lucien then went to see his friends in the Latin Quarter; but he had gone too far away from their lofty ideals. Under the tutelage of Lousteau, Lucien began to pull many wires. Lousteau got the editorship of Finot's paper, and Lucien was taken on the staff. Dauriat now returned *The Marguerites* to Lucien, and Lousteau showed him how to get him to publish it. A severe review by Lucien of Nathan's new book, published by Dauriat, caused that publisher to make terms. He called on Lucien at Coralie's house, and agreed to issue *The Marguerites* if Lucien would agree to attack no more of his publications.

Coralie bestowed everything upon Lucien: her love, beautiful presents, and handsome clothes. In a fit of sentiment, he sent some money to Eve, David, and his mother; and Coralie thought him a model son and brother. One night, at the Opera, he attracted attention, and the Comtesse de Montcornet told Blondet to bring him to her home. The Baron du Châtelet had taken the skit about the Baron Heron and the cuttlefish seriously, and Blondet was willing to try to reconcile Madame de Bargeton and Lucien at Madame de Montcornet's house. Lucien, however, wanted to write something sharp against "the Heron and the Cuttlefish," before going. For a month, Lucien's time was taken up with supper-parties, break-

fasts, and evening gatherings. Easy work and dissipation, without a thought of the future, filled his whole time. In dress and figure he was a rival to all the dandies of the day. When he went to the German Minister's dinner, he was the equal in appearance of Rastignac, De Marsay, Vandenesse, Maxime de Trailles, and the other young men of fashion. Madame de Montcornet and Madame d'Espard overwhelmed him with attentions. The Marquise told him that Monsieur de Bargeton was dead, and reproached him for having wounded Louise's heart. The insight she gave him into society was another lost illusion. Of the bad faith in journalism he had had some experience; but he hardly expected to find bad faith or treachery in society. There were still some sharp lessons in store for him. The Marquise told him also that Louise was trying to get a royal patent, permitting him to bear the name and title of De Rubempré.

In the Minister's hôtel in the Faubourg Saint-Germain Lucien saw a very different kind of splendor from that of the world in which he had been living. When he stepped into the carriage in the courtyard, however, Coralie was waiting for him. A week later, Lucien went to Madame de Montcornet's house. There he met Louise, now a happy widow. Her old feeling for Lucien returned; but he would not sacrifice the actress for the great lady. She left the room with a fixed determination to be revenged.

Lucien was a great success. Beautiful Mademoiselle des Touches, so well known as "Camille Maupin," asked him to one of her Wednesday dinners. Another thing turned the poet's head: every man who entered a drawing-room had a title, while he was plain Chardon. He learned to ride, and escorted great ladies in the Bois, and Finot gave him an order to criticize the Opera, where he spent many evenings. In short, he became one of the exquisites of the day. He made mistakes, however, and one of his greatest blunders was in giving a breakfast in Coralie's rooms to Rastignac and his fashionable friends. Lucien also took to cards and gambling—rivals that Coralie did not fear. Châtelet, seeing that his rival still had a chance, became Lucien's friend, and encouraged him in dissipation that wasted his energies. Debts increased, and finally creditors

seized Coralie's horses, carriages, and furniture for four thousand francs; everything else was at the pawnbroker's.

Lousteau and Florine were in the same plight. Lousteau and Lucien tried in various ways to raise money, among publishers, booksellers, and Jew usurers; then they tried gambling. When Lucien went home he found a note from Coralie. The Panorama-Dramatique had suddenly failed; and she, in alarm, had sold her furniture and hurried with Bérénice and twelve hundred francs to a fourth-floor lodging in the Rue de la Lune. Lucien awoke next morning in an enchanted world of happiness made about him by Coralie. She was even more loving and tender in these days of poverty. Coralie began to study a part for the Gymnase, and Lucien built hopes on his new position as a Royalist journalist. As Bérénice was serving a modest breakfast, there was a knock at the door. Giraud, Chrestien, and D'Arthez entered. They had come to beg Lucien not to sully his character by becoming a turncoat. They could do nothing with him; for he was determined to take his place in society as Count Lucien de Rubempré. The next day Lucien allowed his name to appear in the list of contributors to the *Réveil*, and joined the Royalist journalists with a great flourish and a dinner at Robert's. The Opposition papers ridiculed him unmercifully; and, in the very paper in which he had made so brilliant a beginning, Lucien was called "the Poet *sans* Sonnets"; and a paragraph, pretending to explain why Dauriat withheld them from publication was accompanied by a bitter burlesque sonnet called *Le Chardon* ("The Thistle"), in allusion to his name.

Lucien had been a Liberal and a hot Voltairean; now he was a rabid Royalist and a Romantic. "I cannot think of another example of such rapid success," said Finot one night; "his old friends cannot forgive him for it; they call it luck." The fact was, he had lost all of his friends, even Lousteau.

Lucien now took a humiliating step: he actually went to Camusot and got him to discount some bills; but he did not tell this to Coralie. Next, he played traitor to D'Arthez, whose book was given him to review. It was on the eve of Coralie's début at the Gymnase. He was ordered to write "a slashing article," which he at first refused to do. He was told that a

renegade could not do as he pleased, and to choose between D'Arthez and Coralie; for, if he did not "slate" the book, a blow should be dealt to Coralie. Lucien went to D'Arthez and told him that he was ordered to write an attack of his book. After all, Coralie failed; for the audience was cold and the press bitter. Coralie became ill, and Florine (who was in the intrigue) took her part and created a sensation. Lucien then tried Frascati's, and lost everything; and, running across Finot, who gave him an anecdote of the Keeper of the Seals, promised to write articles for his paper. He also persuaded Mademoiselle des Touches to give Coralie the heroine's part in a play she was writing. The terrible story of the Keeper of the Seals was published. Lucien was discovered as the author and disgraced. Baron du Châtelet told Lucien that but for his articles he would not so soon have been given the title of Comte du Châtelet, and that he was now Councilor Extraordinary, with the promise of the prefecture of the Charente. They went together to the Secretary-General's office. Des Lupeaulx, a functionary, denounced Lucien, and showed him the manuscript of the article that had appeared in Finot's paper. Lucien was stunned. He went into the Place Vendôme; and, while wandering about, saw his book advertised, with a ridiculous title. He did not notice Rastignac and De Marsay, nor Léon Giraud and Michel Chrestien approaching.

"Are you Monsieur Chardon?" said the latter.

"Do you not know me?" said Lucien, turning pale.

Michel spat in his face: "Take that as your wages for your article against D'Arthez. If everybody would do as I do, in his own or his friend's behalf, the press would be as it ought to be—a self-respecting and respected priesthood." Lucien struck Michel in the face, and asked Rastignac to be his second. In the duel, Lucien was wounded, and Coralie found it difficult to act away from her prostrate lover. Lucien's book failed; Camusot entered proceedings against him; Coralie broke down and had to give her part to Florine; and debt, distress, and poverty threatened to engulf them. In despair, Lucien imitated the handwriting of his brother-in-law, David Séchard, and drew three bills of a thousand francs each, due in one, two, and three months, and indorsed and took them to Métivier, who

gave him the cash. Lucien paid the debts and tried to work, but he had "written himself out."

Bianchon now told them that Coralie had only a few days to live. Her death took all the heart out of Lucien; and, in order to pay the funeral expenses, he had to write ten rollicking songs to fit popular airs. He was shouting the reckless refrain when D'Arthez and Bianchon arrived to find him in a paroxysm of despair and exhaustion. Mademoiselle des Touches arrived with money, but she came too late: Coralie, aged nineteen years, was dead!

Lucien now decided to return to Angoulême; but he could not find enough money. Bérénice got it for him from a stranger. "Here are your twenty francs," she said, "they may cost dear, yet; but you can go." She fled. This was the final brand set upon Lucien by life in Paris.

URSULE MIROUËT (1841)

Balzac considered this novel a "most beautiful piece of work." He dedicated it to his niece, saying: "You young girls are a public to be dreaded; you ought never to be suffered to read any book less pure than your own pure souls."

N 1778, Mesmer, the discoverer of animal magnetism, settled in Paris, where he created a great sensation by the practise of his art. He was bitterly opposed by the physicians of the city, chief among whom was Dr. Minoret, a member of the circle known as encyclopedists, and at last he was driven from Paris to end his days in poverty and exile.

Though an ardent atheist and a Republican, Dr. Minoret had married a devout Catholic and Royalist, Ursule, daughter of Valentin Mirouët, the famous harpsichord-player. During the Revolution she died of an aneurism, precipitated by the sight of Madame Roland on her way to the guillotine. She left no children to be a solace to her desolated husband.

Now her father, Valentin Mirouët, had a natural son, known as Joseph Mirouët, whom he recognized but never legitimatized out of regard for his daughter, Madame Minoret. Handsome, a divine singer, Joseph was withal wayward, and ran away in early manhood to make a career for himself. At the age of forty he married a music-mad daughter of a merchant in Hamburg. The blissful pair ran through with her fortune in less than a year, when, happily ignorant of this fact, the wife died in giving birth to a daughter. Joseph drifted with the infant to Paris, shortly before the capitulation of that city in 1814, and, humbled by poverty, took a situation as regimental bandmaster. Worn out by grief and privation, he became mortally ill, and was taken to the camp hospital, where Dr. Minoret chanced to find him. The physician made the last hours of the dying man happy by adopting the child, standing

godfather to her (though "church mummeries" were repugnant to him) and christening her with the name of his beloved wife, Ursule. Thenceforth the doctor began to live for little Ursule alone. He would sometimes tell his friends that he suffered from pain in his teeth when the baby was cutting hers.

Feeling that Paris in those troublous times was no place in which to rear a child, the old man thought of his birthplace, Nemours, which he had not visited since he was a young man. Having purchased a suitable house there through an agent, he suddenly made his appearance in that provincial seat, creating the greatest possible excitement among its citizens, for Nemours was inhabited chiefly by an intermixture of families of which the clan Minoret furnished the common base. There were such families as Massin-Minoret, Minoret-Minoret, Minoret-Levrault, Minoret-Crémière, besides offshoots such as Minoret-François and Jean-Minoret—enough to madden a Father Anselme, if Nemours ever required a genealogist.

The advent of the old doctor, reputed to be fabulously rich, and with no relatives nearer than themselves, became the sole topic of discussion in most of the households of the city, and the occasion of numerous family councils. Désiré Minoret-Levrault, the postmaster's son, a dandified young law-student of Paris, home on his vacation, looked up the laws on inheritance, and announced that the law would probably refuse to recognize a will made by the old man in favor of Ursule, since, though herself born in lawful wedlock, her father was an illegitimate child, and it was impossible to prove the existence of that tie of kinship between testator and inheritor which the State, in defense of legitimate relationship, had made requisite. At the worst, the old man would probably bequeath her a competency. There was one sure consolation, said the smart young legal aspirant to his mother, Zélie, the old man was a confirmed atheist, and would leave nothing to the Church. "Thank God!" ejaculated the pious woman.

Dr. Minoret had little to do with his relatives. He attached to himself two warm friends, the Abbé Chaperon and Monsieur Bongrand, the judge of the district. The friends became as devoted to Ursule as was the doctor. In deference to the desire expressed by her dying father, Ursule's guardian permitted the

Abbé to instruct the little girl in the Catholic religion. Under the guidance of this devout man, Ursule became a pious and mystical creature, with whom the love of God was inextricably entwined with the love of her godfather. When she set out for her first communion in her pretty white frock, with her eyes shining like stars, she said to the admiring old man: "Why are you not coming too, godfather? Am I to be happy without you?" Then it was that a secret struggle began between infidel old age and devout youth which was destined to set the town by the ears.

This contest culminated in victory for Ursule through a very curious experience of the doctor's. Since his retirement to Nemours, the science of imponderable agents had been developed to account for the phenomena of mesmerism. The materialists could not successfully combat it, and so an old colleague of Dr. Minoret in his fight with Mesmer called on him to return to Paris to confute a new "charlatan" that had arisen, practising the same cult.

This man, by the visions of a medium whom he threw into a magnetic trance, claimed to be able to tell what was occurring at a distance, thereby proving the existence of a spiritual world dominated by higher than physical laws.

Dr. Minoret called upon this so-called impostor, and to his surprise found him a man of noble presence and great dignity of manner. The mesmerist caused his medium to pass into a trance, and invited his visitor to test her clairvoyance. The doctor asked her what Ursule was doing at Nemours, and also of what she was thinking.

"She is marking a tiny red spot opposite Saint Savinien's day in the calendar, and she is thinking of a young man who bears that name," was the answer.

"Ah," ejaculated the doctor, "the son of Madame de Portenduère, our neighbor!"

Dr. Minoret was so agitated that he left the room at once, and took stage for Nemours. On his arrival he went at once to Ursule's chamber, and looked at the calendar upon her dressing-table. There, opposite St. Savinien's day, he found a small red mark. And this dot, no larger than a pin's head, the clairvoyante had discerned in spite of distance and obstacles!

The infidel was forced to submit to evidence. A thick wall within himself, as it were, crumbled down, for he had founded his infidelity upon his materialism. Kneeling by the bedside, where every night and morning Ursule prayed for his conversion, he lifted up his soul to God, beseeching forgiveness.

The next morning he asked Ursule to let him accompany her to mass.

"My little godmother," he said, "at last you have brought me to God."

Far prouder than even on her first communion was Ursule, as, arm in arm with the old man, she entered the house of God.

But his relatives were in the greatest consternation at the sight, and met in spontaneous conclave to discuss measures to keep the old man's money from falling into the hands of Ursule and the Church. Dionis, the notary, presented the most acceptable plan.

"I should be likely to know it if your uncle had made a will, and I do not believe he has done so. He has probably made a secret hoard, the hiding-place of which he intends to reveal only to those he wishes to be his heirs. My advice, therefore, is that he should be induced to invest his capital in such a way as to make it difficult for him to dispossess you, his lawful heirs. The opportunity for such investment now offers. Young Portenduère, after cutting quite a dash in Parisian society, is locked up for a hundred thousand francs of debts. His old mother is distracted, and has invited the Abbé Chaperon to dinner, to talk over the matter, no doubt. Now, the Abbé, having opened up to the old man an endless inheritance of heavenly glory, can undoubtedly influence him in the disposition of his earthly riches. I am in my rights as a notary in applying to your uncle in behalf of the Portenduères, and, seconded by the Abbé, I think I can persuade him to lend the sum necessary to release the young prodigal, taking mortgages on Madame de Portenduère's farm and her city house. Perhaps I can get him to put the rest of his money in other mortgages. If so, I will see that his capital is tied up in this way until he dies."

Next day Dionis presented this proposition to Dr. Minoret in the presence of the *curé* and Ursule. The shrewd old man at once refused it.

"My heirs would undoubtedly be glad to see me sewn up in this fashion. But my arrangements are unalterable. Monsieur de Portenduère must remain in prison if his release depends on me."

Hearing these words Ursule, with an inarticulate cry, sank in her chair, with her head lying on the table. The doctor sprang to her side. "Good evening, Monsieur," he said to the notary, "leave me."

"What is it, my child?" he asked, after Ursule had recovered her senses.

"Savinien—in prison!" she cried.

"I did not know, sweetheart, that you loved him so much already."

"I do not love him, godfather; we have never spoken to each other," she sobbed. "But to know that the poor young man is in prison, and to hear you, who are so kind, sternly refuse to help him out—"

"Ursule, my sweet little woman, if you do not love him, why have you put a red dot to the day of Saint Savinien? Come, confess to your godfather, whose heart in these last few days has become more tender to you than ever it was."

"Well, then, dear godfather, I will open my soul to you. While you were in Paris Monsieur de Portenduère came from that city on a flying visit to his mother, to return next day—alas, poor unsuspecting young man!—to a prison they were preparing for him. In the morning, as I opened my window, I saw across the way Monsieur Savinien shaving himself. I saw his throat so white and round, and he combed his imperial, and twirled his black mustache with such grace! Something rose up in me like a mist, penetrating my bosom with a delicious warmth, and setting my head aswim. I trembled so that I could not stand. But I longed to see him so much that I pulled myself up on tiptoe; then he noticed me, and for fun he blew me a kiss from the tips of his fingers, and—"

"And—?"

"I hid myself, ashamed and happy, without understanding

why I should be ashamed of my happiness. He went away that evening, taking my heart with him."

"My child," said the doctor tenderly, "your love is natural, and you need not be ashamed of it. But there are many natural impulses that in the unequal conditions of life we must restrain. You must reserve your love for your future husband, and that Monsieur Savinien can never be. His mother would never consent that the son of Vicomte de Portenduère of the Royal Navy should marry the daughter of a regimental band-master who was—for now I must tell you—the bastard son of an organist, my father-in-law."

"Yes, godfather, you are right. We are equals only in the eyes of God. I will think of him no more—except in my prayers. But give him all you have intended to leave me. What can a poor girl like me want of money?—and he, in prison!"

"I will do anything you like, child."

When her godfather set out for Paris to release young M. de Portenduère, Ursule found so many ingenious reasons for going along with him that he had neither the wit nor the heart to refuse her. Arriving at the city, she insisted on seeing the prison wherein they had shut up the poor young man.

"My child," said the doctor, "this is not forgetting him."

"Oh," replied the young girl naïvely, "I may love him even if I do not marry him."

The young man returned to Nemours in the stage-coach with the doctor and Ursule. The young girl fell asleep, and her head, resting on the old man's shoulder, cushioned by curls, made such an enchanting picture of trusting innocence that Savinien, contrasting the provincial maiden with the bold beauties of the city whose coquetries had lured him into his ruinous extravagance, fell headlong in love. Impetuous in reforming his career as he had been in ruining it, he vowed to win Ursule Mirouët as his wife. Knowing his mother's aristocratic prejudices, he realized that this would be no easy task.

He was thoroughly sobered when, on entering his home, he found that his mother was not at the threshold to greet him.

"She is waiting for you in your father's room," said Tiennette, the old servant.

Then Savinien realized for the first time how deeply his mother was affected by his disgrace; for his father's room, which she kept in the exact condition it was in when her husband, the naval captain, died in it, was her holy of holies, into which she retired in spiritual crises.

"Monsieur le Vicomte," said the stately woman, rising as he entered and pointing to the bed, "there your father died—a man of honor. His spirit is above. Can you swear to me, before that Shade, and before God, who sees all things, that your debts were the consequences only of a young man's follies, that you have wronged no man nor woman—in short, that your honor is unspotted?"

"Yes, mother," said the young man gravely.

She opened her arms and clasped him to her heart.

"Then all is forgotten; we have lost nothing but money!"

Through the influence of his uncle, Admiral de Kergarouët, Savinien secured a minor appointment in the navy. Then he called upon Dr. Minoret, and told him of his new chance in life, that might lead in time to his father's rank.

"Monsieur, will you give your ward to a ship's captain?" he asked.

"No," replied Dr. Minoret with a smile; "we might have to wait too long, but—to a ship's lieutenant."

In December, 1834, the doctor, now eighty-eight years old, took to his bed from sheer weakness of age. The heirs heard that he was dying and trooped to his house to take possession and prevent anything being removed. The old man ordered them out, saying, "I want to be alone with Ursule." All the heirs departed save the postmaster, Minoret-Levrault, who slipped into the gallery adjoining the sick man's chamber. He overheard the old doctor tell his ward the location of a hidden letter, and command her to bring it to him when the nurse had returned to relieve her.

The eavesdropper stole away and secured the letter. Taking it home he opened it, and found a note to Ursule, telling

the hiding-place of valuable certificates intended for her, and a will, getting around the law that forbade bequests to illegitimate relatives by leaving the old man's property to Ursule's intended husband, Savinien. Striking two matches that went out, and a third that lighted, the postmaster burned the note and will, and buried their ashes and the wax of the envelope in the cinders on the hearth. Returning to the doctor's house, he found it in commotion over the old man's death. He had expired with dismay on seeing Ursule return empty-handed from her errand to find the will. In the confusion the postmaster was able to steal the certificates without detection.

The heirs drove the hapless ward out of her godfather's house, of which they took possession. The postmaster, conspiring with a malicious clerk of the notary, Goupil, tried to drive her out of town, by concocting most diabolical anonymous letters, telling of Savinien's engagement to an aristocratic girl, and by hiring a band to serenade her, as if from a lover. But her father's old friends stood by her, and, though stricken almost to death by shame of the notoriety to which she was subjected, she survived to triumph over her detractors, through the very condition into which they had thrown her. In this state of physical prostration she became endowed with clairvoyant powers, and in a trance she beheld Dr. Minoret beckoning her to follow him. He led her to the hiding-place of the letter, and showed her the postmaster stealing it. Following the thief home, guided by her godfather's apparition, she saw Minoret-Levrault burn the letter after two ineffectual attempts, and bury the wax and ashes in the cinders. So, too, she saw the postmaster return to Dr. Minoret's house and steal the certificates.

Ursule told this dream to the Abbé Chaperon and Justice Bongrand. They confronted the postmaster with the details of his theft. Though frightened, he maintained a bold front. Finally the apparition of the doctor foretold a terrible accident to his son, which soon after took place. Seeing the hand of God in all these events, at last he broke down and made full confession and restitution. A reaction took place among the heirs, and Ursule became the heroine of Nemours. Madame de Portenduère's opposition to the marriage of her son and

Mademoiselle Mirouët at last broke down, and the young pair were wedded upon the day Savinien received his commission as lieutenant.

When, in the Champs-Elysées you see one of those neat little low carriages, known as *escargots* (or snail-shells), drive past, and admire a pretty, fair woman leaning lightly against a young man, her face surrounded by a myriad of curls, like light foliage, with eyes like luminous periwinkle-flowers, full of love—if you should feel the sting of envious wishes, remember that this handsome couple, the favorites of God, have paid in advance their tribute to the woes of life. For these married lovers will undoubtedly be the Vicomte de Portenduère and his wife. There are not two such couples in all Paris.

CATHERINE DE' MEDICI (1841)

This historical romance consists of three separate stories of different lengths, entirely independent of one another. The first part, *Le Martyr Calviniste*, was the last of the three in regard to date of publication. It first appeared in *Le Siècle*, under the title of *Les Lecamus*. The second part was the second also with regard to date of publication. It has retained its title, *Le Sécret de Ruggieri*. It appeared in *Le Chronique de Paris* in 1836–1837. The third part, *Les Deux Rêves*, had appeared in *La Mode* as early as 1830; also as *Le Petit Souper* in the *Revue de deux Mondes*. It was included in *Romans et Contes Philosophiques* in 1831. These three stories, with an *Introduction*, were published in three volumes, in 1843, under the title of *Catherine de Medici Expliquée;* but when the work was included in the *Etudes Philosophiques* in 1846, the title was changed to *Sur Catherine de' Medici*. In his *Introduction* Balzac says: "In France, and at the most important period of our history, Catherine de' Medici has suffered more from popular error than any other woman, unless it be Brunehaut or Frédégonde; while Marie de' Medici, whose every action was prejudicial to France, has escaped the disgrace that should cover her name. . . . Catherine de' Medici, on the contrary, saved the throne of France; she maintained the royal authority under circumstances to which more than one great prince would have succumbed. Face to face with such leaders of the factions and ambitions of the houses of Guise and of Bourbon as the two Cardinals of Lorraine and the two Balafrés, the two Princes de Condé, Queen Jeanne d'Albret, Henri IV, the Connétable de Montmorency, Calvin, the Colignys, and Théodore de Bèze, she was forced to put forth the rarest fine qualities, the most essential gifts of statesmanship, under the fire of the Calvinist press. These, at any rate, are indisputable facts; and to the student who digs deep into the history of the sixteenth century in France, the figure of Catherine de' Medici stands out as that of a great king."

PART I

THE CALVINIST MARTYR

ON the bank of the Seine, at the end of the Pont au Change, lived Master Lecamus, furrier to Catherine de' Medici and Mary Stuart. He was very wealthy and the head of his guild. He was secretly in sympathy with the new religious teaching that was setting Paris by the ears, as was also his son, Christophe, an ardent youth of two-and-twenty.

One evening in April, 1560, the latter received a visit from a man who announced himself as Chaudieu, one of the most famous ministers and heroic actors in the ter-

rible drama about to open. He led Christophe down to a boat, containing two men, which was rowed under one of the arches of the bridge. There the occupants could talk without being overheard. The two strangers were La Renaudie and the Prince de Condé. The four men were representative of the faith of the people, the intellect of eloquence, the arm of the soldier, and royalty cast into the shade.

Christophe declared that he was ready to suffer all things for the holy cause, and the plans of the conspirators were revealed to him. He was told that most of the nobles of the kingdom saw through the schemes of the Cardinal de Lorraine and his brother, the Duc de Guise, who, under pretense of defending the Catholic faith, claimed the Crown of France as the inheritance of the House of Lorraine. "It leans on the Church, and has made it a formidable ally; the monks are its supporters, its acolytes and spies. It asserts itself as a protector of the throne it hopes to usurp, of the Valois it hopes to destroy." Therefore, the reformers had decided to rise in arms, because the liberties of the people were threatened, as well as the interests of the nobility. "The Queen Mother is ready to enter into our views. Humiliated and desperate as she is at seeing the power she had hoped to wield at the King's death in the grasp of the Guises, and alarmed at the influence exerted by the young Queen Mary, Queen Catherine will be inclined to support the nobles who are about to strike a blow. Though apparently devoted to the Guises, she hates them, longs for their ruin, and will make use of us to oppose them. . . . Everything is ready; and we have cast our eyes on you to communicate to Queen Catherine our treaty of alliance, our schemes for edicts, and the basis of the new rule."

Though Catherine was under close espionage, it would be possible for the son of the court furrier to deliver some garment and the papers at the same time. He was given to understand, however, that should he be taken, he would be abandoned by everybody, and opprobrium and disgrace would be cast upon him. Entire self-sacrifice was demanded of him, and he gladly consented. Instructions were given as to the way to reach Blois, and he was landed at the back door of his father's house.

The Syndic of the Guild of Furriers was a cunning and clear-sighted man of vast ambitions. He had amassed an immense fortune and planned a splendid future for his son. He longed to place the house of Lecamus on a par with the oldest and most honored families of Paris citizens. He had engaged his son to Babette Lallier, the daughter of the rich Syndic of the Goldsmiths, and was ambitious to see his son a Councilor of the Parliament. He had spied on Christophe; and, on the latter's entrance, encouraged him on his perilous quest. He concluded that his schemes would not suffer by Christophe's being of service to Queen Catherine.

Catherine's position when Diane de Poitiers ruled Henri II had been more endurable than now: at least, she had enjoyed the homage and respect of the court; but now she was practically a prisoner at Blois, and her Guise jailers took pleasure in humiliating her. Every hour she was the object of blows offensive to her dignity. She was, therefore, ready to make use of any party that would help her to destroy the Guises: the tools she would throw away later. Her game was to play off the Huguenots, the Bourbons, and the Guises against one another.

On the day when Christophe reached Blois, the two Princes of Guise were on the eve of striking a fatal blow at the heart of the nobility, of whose plans their spies had informed them, and were discussing the means of announcing their *coup d'état* to the King. They knew that their niece, Mary, would approve of extinguishing heresy with a single blow.

After much trouble, Christophe succeeded in placing the compromising documents in Catherine's hands; but before she could conceal them, Mary Stuart, who regarded her mother-in-law as a low-born intriguing adventuress, and one who having been humbled was always prepared for revenge, kept a close watch on her. Her suspicions being aroused by Catherine's absence from the council, she broke in on her mother-in-law's privacy. Catherine immediately cried: "Treason, Madame! I have them fast! Send for the Cardinal and the Duke, and be sure that this fellow does not escape!" Pleased at finding her adversaries in the mind she had hoped for, now

that the plot had become known, policy required her to assume the merit of discovering it.

On being asked who had sent him, Christophe said Chaudieu, the preacher, had, and even under horrible torture could not be induced to implicate the Prince de Condé, whose head the Guises were so anxious should fall. Even in his worst agonies from the "boot," he denied that he had ever seen that Prince. The Duke exhorted him in vain to confess, and he could hear Catherine say: "Go on; after all, he is only a heretic!" She thought it prudent to appear more severe to her accomplice than his executioners were. The whole future of this ambitious woman depended on her demeanor, so she gazed on Christophe's sufferings calmly, although she felt the greatest admiration for his fortitude.

The Princes of Lorraine transferred the court to Amboise. At this moment, the crown, the council, the court, and every kind of power were in their hands. The first rush to arms had ended in the brief skirmish in which the flower of the nobility whom Calvin had misled all perished. This affair the Guises, with crafty policy, spoke of as the riots at Amboise. The Prince de Condé now showed astuteness and spirit. He boldly went to Amboise, where he was immediately arrested. Chicot, the jester, visited him with a message from the Queen Mother that nothing but daring could get him out of the scrape. On being conducted to the court, Catherine sternly accused him of plotting with the reformers. Thereupon Condé flung his glove at the King's feet, angrily challenging his calumniator to stand forth. The Duc de Guise unexpectedly stepped forward and offered to be his second, with the crafty intention of watching his behavior at the execution of his rebel friends.

The King's victory over the heretics, together with the execution to be inflicted, was announced from every pulpit, and the *auto-da-fé* attracted vast multitudes. Lecamus had hurried to Blois on hearing of his son's danger; but could only learn that after torture he had been removed to Amboise. He was, therefore, an agitated spectator of the hideous spectacle. Fifty gentlemen in all ascended the scaffold, including twenty-seven barons, eleven counts, and seven marquises. They all refused to recant, and sang their Calvinistic hymn on the appearance of

the court. They bowed to Condé, who was purposely placed between Queen Mary and the Duc d'Orléans. He returned their salutations, and maintained his nerve throughout the horrible massacre. The next day he was released and set out for Navarre.

Lecamus, not seeing Christophe among the victims, dressed as a beggar and put himself in the way of Catherine as she passed, who told him to get himself appointed delegate to the States General from the Corporation of Paris Guilds.

The Guises had convoked the States General at Orléans in the hope of recapturing their prey and overthrowing the House of Bourbon. The Princes of the blood arrived there under the King's safe conduct. Condé was treacherously arrested, and tried by the magistrates, notwithstanding his demand to be tried by his peers. The King of Navarre was left at liberty, temporarily.

Lecamus arrived at Orléans and learned from Ruggieri, Catherine's astrologer, that Christophe was to be placed on the morrow where the Prince would pass by. If either made a sign of recognition, Condé's head would be forfeited. The astrologer predicted that the Duc de Guise would be killed within a year, but that neither Christophe nor Condé was destined to die. Catherine relied on Christophe's fidelity, and Lecamus was advised to vote for her as Regent. Ruggieri concluded: "The King will die; if he recovers his health, the Guises must triumph, the Princes are dead men, the House of Bourbon is extinct, we go back to Florence, your son is hanged, and the Guises will make short work of the royal family."

At this juncture, Catherine's position was even more critical and dangerous than at Amboise. Though she pretended to be in agreement with the Guises, she was plotting against them. They had planned with the King of Spain to seize Béarn, and Catherine had warned the Queen of Navarre in time. She had also divulged the intention to make away with the King of Navarre, and the Cardinal had denounced her in the King's presence and threatened her with banishment. Catherine immediately warned the Constable Anne de Montmorency of the danger his nephew, Condé, was in, and he at once gathered a force to save him.

Francis II took an excursion on the Loire, so as to be absent at Condé's intended execution; and there caught a cold, which gave him so violent an earache that he was forced to return. The physicians disagreed; but Ambroise Paré, the greatest surgeon of the sixteenth century, maintained that the King had an abscess on the brain and should be trepanned. Lecamus explained the situation to Paré in a midnight interview in the following terms: "If you save the King, you ruin France. Do you know that your instrument will place the crown of the Valois on the head of a Prince of Lorraine calling himself the direct heir of Charlemagne? Do you know that surgery and politics are at this moment at daggers drawn? Yes, the triumph of your genius will be the overthrow of your religion. If the Guises retain the regency, the blood of the Reformers will flow in streams. Be a great citizen rather than a great surgeon." But Paré refused to be influenced. Ruggieri, who learned from Lecamus the nature of Paré's intended operation, immediately hastened to the Queen Mother. In the morning, when Catherine and Mary and the Guises and the doctors and the physicians and attendants were gathered in the King's bedchamber, everyone realized that a terrible crisis was at hand. Catherine strenuously opposed a cruel operation, and the Duke accused her of desiring her son's death. When the discussion was at its height, the Constable hastily entered, and forbade the operation, because the first Prince of the blood, the Prince de Condé, the Queen Mother, and the Chancellor were all opposed to it. As Lord High Constable he had dismissed all the sentinels from their posts, leaving the States General to deliberate in perfect liberty, laying before it the protest of his nephew, whom he had rescued from prison. He accused the Guises of meaning to let the royal blood and decimating the French nobility, and he defied them to oppose him.

Within a few minutes Francis died. Mary Stuart accused Catherine of being his murderess, and Catherine retorted with a sentence of deportation to Scotland the next day. On Catherine's withdrawal, the Guises discussed their fall and fortunes.

"How can we be reconciled to the Queen?" asked the Cardinal.

"Wait till she quarrels with the Huguenots," said the Duchess of Guise.

Catherine's next step was to gain over the Reformers by summoning a convocation, for which Calvin's favor and consent were necessary. Chaudieu was, therefore, sent to Geneva. Catherine thus gained a breathing-space of six months, during which she amused the court, lulled party feeling by the King's coronation, and his first Bed of Justice, when Charles IX entrusted the government to his mother.

Calvin was in a dying condition, and his final decision was as follows: "Nobody, neither the Queen, nor the Guises, nor I, wants pacification: it would not suit our purpose. We must compel the King of Navarre to join the Guises and the Constable, by advising him to desert Queen Catherine. Let us take full advantage of his weakness: he is but a poor creature. If he prove a turncoat to the Italian woman, she, finding herself bereft of his support, must inevitably join Condé and Coligny. Such a maneuver may possibly compromise her so effectually that she must remain on our side." He ended: "Ideas can never grow till they are watered with blood. The murder of the Duc de Guise would give rise to a fearful persecution and I hope for it with all my might. To us, reverses are more favorable than success. The Reformation can be beaten and endure, do you hear, oaf? Whereas Catholicism is overthrown if we win a single battle."

These words were spoken to Théodore de Bèze, Chaudieu's companion. Eighteen months later, Poltrot, who fired a pistol at the Duke, confessed that he had been urged to the crime by De Bèze. On the day when Chaudieu and De Bèze reached Paris, the court returned from Rheims, where Charles IX had been crowned. Catherine had made the coronation unusually splendid, and the occasion of great festivities, which enabled her to gather around her the leaders of every faction. She fully understood that, sooner or later, she must fall back on the Constable Montmorency and the Guises to fight the Huguenots. The convocation, which served to flatter the vanity of the orators on each side, and as an excuse for another imposing ceremony to clear the blood-stained field for the religious war that had indeed already begun, was as futile in the eyes of the

Guises as it was in Catherine's. Catherine flattered the Cardinal de Lorraine into the hope of conquering the heretics by the eloquence of the Princes of the Church, and the Cardinal won over the Duke.

Catherine next had trouble with her son, who was so attached to his tutor, Amyot, that he made him High Almoner of France without consulting his mother. In a rage, Catherine sent for Amyot and threatened him with death unless he induced his pupil to change his mind. Charles IX went immediately to his mother and said: "Madame, did I not comply with your wishes and sign the letter you asked of me for the Parliament, by virtue of which you govern my kingdom? Did you not promise me, when you laid it before me, that my will should be yours? And now the only favor I have cared to bestow excites your jealousy. The Chancellor talks of making me of age at fourteen, three years hence, and you treat me as a child. By God, I mean to be King!"

Catherine was shocked at his tone and tried to explain to him the difficulties and perils of kingcraft; but she had to restore his favorite to the office of High Almoner. She then supplied Charles with a tutor in Albert de Gondi, whom she made a marshal of France and a duke. This Italian gave her the following advice: "You let the late King die to save your other children; well, then, do as the grand seignors of Constantinople do: crush this one's political passions and fancies. He likes the arts, poetry, hunting, and a little girl he saw at Orléans; all this is quite enough to occupy him."

On the return of the Geneva envoys, the convocation of Poissy was arranged for, and on taking leave of De Bèze, Chaudieu whispered: "I have saints in Paris that I can rely on, and I mean to make a prophet of Calvin. Christophe will rid us of our most dangerous enemy."

Meanwhile, the Queen Mother had succeeded in having Condé's trial quashed, and he was reinstated in all his rights, possessions, and honors. Christophe was released in the same proceedings, and, as a compensation for his sufferings, was made a pleader by De Thou. On his return to Paris, he was tenderly nursed by his family and Babette, and the furrier's neighbors were astonished to see him attended by Paré, the

court physician. Old Lecamus gradually worked on his son's heretical mind by recalling the sufferings he had gone through and pointing out the danger of meddling with political reform. Babette also told him that her father would never allow her to marry a heretic. One day his father told him that he had written in Christophe's name to Condé and Queen Jeanne for permission to purchase a legal business in Béarn. In reply, Condé's secretary merely offered a place of a man-at-arms in his own company. This for a man who would hardly be able to stand on his legs for the rest of his life!

The mortified Christophe, however, felt confident that Catherine would be more grateful.

Soon after this, Chaudieu called and reproached him for his apostasy, and did his utmost to win Christophe back to Calvinism and to persuade him to assassinate the Duc de Guise —but in vain.

Not long after the Syndic of the Goldsmiths spent half a million livres for a fine estate in Picardy belonging to the Crown; and one evening, when Christophe and Babette were to be betrothed, Catherine and Charles IX unexpectedly arrived to grace the occasion and to sign the marriage contract on condition that Christophe should remain a Catholic. As a present the King and Catherine permitted the purchase of the offices and appointments of Groslay, Councilor of the Parliament, who accompanied their Majesties. The King remitted all royal fines and fees of the Picardy estate as a wedding-gift to the bride. Old Lecamus was shrewd enough to offer the King a splendid silver cup by Benvenuto Cellini, which was graciously accepted, and the Queen presented Babette with a diamond ring. Before leaving, Christophe managed to inform Catherine of the Duc de Guise's danger, and received her renewed thanks.

This was the origin of the famous Lecamus family of lawyers, who were particularly celebrated and magnificent during the seventeenth century.

PART II

THE RUGGIERIS' SECRET

One evening, toward the end of October, 1573, the court was in attendance after supper on the two Queens and the King. Queen Elizabeth of Austria and her mother-in-law, Catherine de' Medici, were seated on one side of the great fireplace, and in the other corner, sunk lethargically after hunting, or sulking, sat Charles IX in his big armchair. Of all the dull assembly the two Gondis alone were laughing. Albert, who had come with Catherine from Italy and had been made Duc de Retz and Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and had obtained a marshal's bâton without ever having commanded an army, had also been sent as the King's proxy to marry Charles's bride at Spires. This fact alone showed that he was one of the few persons whom the King and Queen admitted to a certain familiarity. On the King's side of the room, among the courtiers, the most conspicuous were the old Cardinal de Lorraine and his nephew, the young Duc de Guise. These two chiefs of the Holy Alliance looked as submissive as servants awaiting their opportunity to become masters. Catherine and her son were watching each other like two cats.

Each of the three royal personages had reason for gloomy reflection. The young Queen was enduring all the torments of jealousy, and disguised them ineffectually by trying to smile at her husband, whom, as a pious woman of infinite kindness, she adored. Marie Touchet, the only mistress of Charles IX, for whom he entirely neglected his gentle wife, had lately returned from Fayet in Dauphiné, bringing with her the only son Charles IX ever had—Charles, afterward Duc d'Angoulême. Another trouble was that Catherine, who, hitherto, had apparently been her friend, had lately encouraged her son's infidelity.

The reason of this was that Marie preferred happiness to splendor, and dearly loved the King for his own sake. She was ignorant of the ambitious objects aimed at by the women of family who were struggling for the advancement of themselves and their relatives with the weapons of love. The insignificant Marie Touchet spared Catherine the annoyance of

finding in her son's mistress the daughter of some great house who might have set up as her rival. She had tasted that cup of bitterness during the sway of Diane de Poitiers. The gentle Marie, therefore, won her warm affection, and later Catherine left the son her personal estate. Marie, who asked for nothing, had already received from Catherine the manor of Belleville, near Vincennes, in which royal residence Charles spent the greater part of his later days, hunting in the surrounding forest.

Anything that kept the King interested outside of politics was pleasing to Catherine. She had been watching the King because during supper he had been suspiciously cheerful, a mood strongly in contrast to the fractious humor he had betrayed by his persistent hunting and by his frenzied toil at his forge, where he wrought iron. Catherine was satisfied that some scheme against herself was in the wind, and the unexpected appearance of the Maréchal de Tavannes on business had greatly strengthened her suspicions.

Two words—dominion and astrology—fully summarize this strange woman. She had no passion but for power, and her only sincere belief was in the occult sciences. To Cosmo Ruggieri, her astrologer, she clung more than to her children. She housed him and made him her chief adviser. Her trust seemed to be justified by the horoscopes he had cast and the events he had correctly predicted. From her earliest years, the events of her life had justified the horoscope. Catherine's devouring thirst for dominion was so great that, in order to grasp or retain it, she could ally herself with the enemies of the throne; and to keep the reins of power in her own hands she would sacrifice her friends and even her children. She could not live without the intrigues of rule, and, though a Medici, even the Calvinists never accused her of having a lover. She upheld by turns the Guises and the Calvinists; then, after using the two creeds to check each other in the heart of the people, she set the Duc d'Anjou against his brother, Charles IX. After instilling into the King's mind a jealousy of his brother, she worked upon this feeling so as to exhaust Charles's really fine qualities in the intrigues of rivalry with his brother. When the Duc d'Anjou went to govern Poland, he robbed her of the means of keeping the mind of Charles IX occupied with

domestic intrigues. Catherine then hatched the La Mole and Coconnas conspiracy, in which her fourth son had a hand. This plot, now ripening, aimed to put the young Duke and his brother-in-law, the King of Navarre, at the head of the Calvinists, seizing and imprisoning the heirless Charles IX, thus leaving the throne vacant for the Duke, who purposed establishing Calvinism in France.

La Mole and Coconnas had now been in prison for fifty days, and were to be beheaded in the following April. Cosmo Ruggieri's participation in the affair shows that Catherine secretly directed it. Cosmo admitted that he had furnished La Mole with an image representing the King stabbed to the heart with two needles. This kind of witchcraft was a capital crime, and Charles's death alone saved Ruggieri from the King's vengeance.

At this moment, Charles was only anxious to shake off his mother's yoke. He watched her proceedings and kept her in ignorance of his own, with much of her own craft. He was trying by cunning measures to seize the reins of government.

The secret of the drama that was being played was guessed by some of their followers, especially the Italians.

Charles IX was worn out. He was in the last stages of the illness of which he died, and Ambroise Paré and Jean Chapelain had been sent for secretly to observe him. Before leaving the room, the King exchanged a few confidential words with Tavannes. The Maréchal de Retz remarked that he looked royally bored, and Charles acknowledged that he missed the good old days when they used to go gadding about at night, jumping across the narrow streets from roof to roof, breaking in shutters, beating watchmen, and generally annoying and maltreating respectable citizens. A party was therefore made up to go night-hawking once more.

The two Gondis soon fell behind the others to discuss the dangerous trend of events, while Charles and two others went on till they came to the house of René, the court perfumer, who was credited with having invented the famous *elixir à succession*, and had poisoned the mother of Henri IV. Charles had long been anxious to explore the laboratory in which René was often visited by Ruggieri. When, therefore, he saw a

light in a window on the roof, he crawled along the parapet and peeped in. He saw a large room lighted by a big lamp, and the ceiling was rendered invisible by the numbers of hanging animals, skeletons, and dried herbs; the room was filled with books, retorts, chests full of instruments for magic and astrology, and diagrams for horoscopes, vials, and wax figures. There were also two lighted stoves on which heretical mixtures were brewing; besides a large table and a couch. Seated at the table was a patriarchal old man with a magnificent beard and dressed in black velvet. His attention was divided between a manuscript before him and the concoctions on the stove. On the couch lay a beautiful girl in a trancelike sleep. As the King and Tavannes gazed spellbound upon the scene, the old man arose and left the room, and opened a window from which a view could be had of the column which Catherine had built for Cosmo Ruggieri. They saw light signals exchanged and could perceive Cosmo on the top of the column. In a few minutes Cosmo came in saying: "Good evening, brother." He brought with him a hideous, toothless, hunchbacked, crooked, lame, wrinkled old hag, who stank of devilry and the stake. She sat down by the side of the girl. Though Cosmo could not see the spies, he went up to the girl and took her hand, saying, "Someone is near; who is it?" "The King," said she. Thereupon, the King knocked at the window, which Ruggieri opened and the two jumped into the wizard's kitchen. There the King demanded an explanation, and threatened the astrologers with condign punishment unless they confessed the meaning of it all. They would not give the King any satisfaction, so he and Tavannes set seals on the doors and sent the two witches to René's room, where he and they were guarded by soldiers. The two astrologers Charles had taken to the house of his mistress, and left them there under guard till the next day.

Charles had more work to do that night. Accompanied by one faithful follower, he crossed the Seine and hurried toward the Pré-au-Clercs. There he held a conference with some high nobles, whose friendliest advice was that Madame Catherine should be sewn up in a sack and thrown into the river. Charles told them plainly that he had decided that the time had come

for the royal authority to assert itself. He appealed to them for their support in putting an end to the troubles of the realm, and gave them a month in which to make up their minds. It was four o'clock before he reached the Louvre. He retired to his workshop and went to work at his anvil. At dawn, Catherine entered and warned him of a plot in which his brother D'Alençon was implicated with the King of Navarre and Condé to snatch the Crown by seizing his person. After a long discussion, she left him in perplexity, asking himself, "On which side are the snares? What is the better policy?" and calling on the Almighty to give him the clearness of vision to see into his mother's eyes by questioning the Ruggieri.

Late in the afternoon, Charles made his way to the charming mansion inhabited by Marie Touchet. He found her as gentle, loving, and fascinating as ever. She did her best to soothe his troubled spirit, and before long he was tenderly dandling their infant in his arms. Presently Marie asked him why he had left assassins in her keeping, and he related his adventures of the night before. When Marie expressed a desire to see the mysterious sages, he sent for them and examined them in her presence. Both the Ruggieri deported themselves with extreme dignity and assurance. Lorenzo took the lead in the discussion, which soon developed into a lecture on alchemy, astrology, chemistry, and the other occult sciences.

Notwithstanding his desire to avoid being entrapped by Florentine cunning, the King, as well as his simple-minded mistress, was soon caught and carried away by the rhetoric and rodomontade of the Grand Master of Adepts' pompous and specious flow of words; but Charles was anxious to learn some of the secrets and practise of poisons and poisoning, wax images, and other forms of witchcraft, and therefore turned to stern interrogation after a time. From the omniscience claimed by Lorenzo, Charles learned that the stars said that he was soon to die; his successor would fall by violence; his youngest brother would never reign; that Henri de Bourbon would be King and suffer a violent death; and that Marie Touchet would marry again, have children, and live to be more than eighty years old. Charles went to fetch his infant son, and, while out of the room, learned that a search of the labor-

atory had been barren of results. Cosmo examined the child's hand, while Lorenzo again lectured on the doctrines transmitted through the mysteries of Isis to Chaldæa and Egypt, and brought back to Greece by Pythagoras. Cosmo said: "This child will live nearly a hundred years; he will meet with some checks, but will be happy and honored, having in his veins the blood of the Valois."

"I will go to see you," said the King, who had recovered his good humor; "you can go."

As they reached the Louvre moat, Lorenzo said in Italian: "By God! we have caught them. Much good may it do him!"

"He must make what he can of it," replied Cosmo; "may the Queen do as much for me. We have done a good stroke for her."

A few days later Marie called the King's attention to the fact that Lorenzo had done all the talking and that Cosmo had said nothing. "That is true," said the startled King, "and there was as much falsehood as truth in what they said. Those Italians are as slippery as the silk they spin."

This suspicion explains the hatred of Cosmo that the King immediately betrayed at the trial of La Mole and Coconnas. When he found that Cosmo was implicated in the plot, Charles believed himself duped by the two Italians; for it proved to him that his mother's astrologer did not devote himself exclusively to studying the stars, fulminating powder, and final atoms. Lorenzo had then left the country. By Catherine's influence, Cosmo was condemned only to the galleys and pardoned as soon as Charles was dead.

PART III

THE TWO DREAMS

In 1786, Bodard de Saint-James was one of the most luxurious financiers of Paris, and his wife's extravagance attracted remark. She indulged an ambition of never receiving any but people of quality. One evening in August, therefore, when her rooms were full, the *habitués* were astonished to see two new faces of decidedly inferior birth. To one of her inquisitive

guests, Madame de Saint-James, she explained that one was physician to the Court pages and had done her the great service of removing blemishes in her complexion. The other, a little prim man, as neat as a doll, who looked as if he drank verjuice, was a lawyer from Artois, who had some business with her husband. After this humiliating confession, Madame Bodard returned to her game of faro. When the tables broke up, at half-past twelve, ten of the guests sat down to supper, the two strangers only staying on the pressing invitation of the hostess.

At first the supper was deadly dull, but after a time one of the guests, Beaumarchais, and two of the ladies entered into a little plot to make the two strangers tipsy. The surgeon was easy enough to ply with wine; but, after the first glass, the lawyer, with cold politeness, refused a second.

The hostess turned the conversation to the wonderful suppers given by Cardinal de Rohan to the Comte de Cagliostro, and asserted, with great positiveness, that she had seen Queen Cleopatra. The lawyer said that he quite believed her, because he had spoken to Catherine de' Medici. Nettled at the incredulity of his *convives*, he had to tell his story.

He would not actually swear that it was the Queen herself, because such a miracle appeared impossible to a Christian and a philosopher; but, at any rate, the lady he saw was costumed exactly as in the Queen's famous portrait and had her colorless complexion and familiar features. Cagliostro could not guess the name of the personage in whose company the lawyer wished to be. The latter was utterly amazed. The magic spectacle of a supper where such illustrious women of the past were guests dumfounded him, and when he left about midnight his mind was in a whirl.

As he laid his head upon the pillow the grand shade of Catherine again rose before him; and, prompted by some unknown power, he said: "Ah, Madame, you committed a very great crime!"

"Which?" she asked in a deep voice.

"That for which the signal was given on the 24th of August!"

With a scornful smile, she replied: "Do you call that a crime? It was only an accident. The undertaking was badly

managed, and the good result we looked for failed—for France, for all Europe, and for the Catholic Church. How could we help it? Our orders were badly carried out. We could not find as many Montlucs as we needed. Posterity will not give us credit for the defective communications which hindered us from giving our work the unity of impulse which is necessary to any great *coup d'état;* that was our misfortune. If by the 25th of August not the shadow of a Huguenot had been left in France, I should have been regarded to the remotest posterity as a noble incarnation of Providence. How often have the spirits of Sixtus Fifth, of Richelieu, of Bossuet, secretly accused me of having failed in my undertaking, after daring to conceive of it! And how many regrets attended my death!

"The disease was still rife thirty years after that Saint-Bartholomew's night; and it had caused the shedding of ten times more noble blood in France than was left to be shed on August 26, 1572. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, for which you had medals struck, cost more tears, more blood and money, and killed more prosperity in France than three Saint-Bartholomews. Letellier, with a dip of ink, carried into effect the decree which the crown had secretly desired since my day; but though on August 25, 1572, this tremendous execution was necessary, on August 25, 1685, it was useless. Under Henri de Valois's second son, heresy was scarcely pregnant; under Henri de Bourbon's second son the teeming mother had cast her spawn over the whole world.

"You accuse me of crime, and you raise statues to the son of Anne of Austria! But he and I aimed at the same end. He succeeded; I failed; but Louis Fourteenth found the Protestants disarmed, while in my day they had armies, statesmen, captains, and Germany to back them."

Catherine proceeded in the same strain to defend her course, saying she had been as calm and cold as reason itself. It was all for the sake of the State that she had condemned the Huguenots: it was without pity but without anger; they were the rotten orange in her basket. Her only aversion was for the Guises, who wanted to snatch the crown from her children.

When the lawyer suggested that she might have given to

the Reformers the wise institution which made the reign of Henri IV so glorious and peaceful, she said that the secret of that reign was that a nation needs repose after a furious struggle. Still, Henri committed two terrible blunders: he ought neither to have recanted nor to have left France Catholic after his conversion; he ought to have seen that he could have changed the face of France without a shock—"either not a single stole, or not a single conventicle. To leave two hostile principles at work in a government with nothing to balance them is a crime in a king: it is sowing the seed of revolutions."

Catherine proceeded to say that, although a Pope's niece, she would just as soon have been a Calvinist; and, after all, could it be possible that men of brains still thought that religion had anything to do with that retarded revolution? "A revolution," said she, with a look of deep meaning, "which is still progressing, and which you may achieve—yes, you, who hear me!"

Luther and Calvin, Catherine held, by pointing out to the middle classes the abuses of Rome, aroused a spirit of general investigation, and examination leads to doubt. Instead of faith, an inquisitive and destructive philosophy rose; science bred heresy, indefinite liberty was aimed at more than reform. The Reformers sought to annihilate religion and royalty, and the middle classes were to join in an international compact. Catherine maintained that she stood between Louis XII and Richelieu, the one who lived too soon and the other too late as a visible link in an unrecognizable chain. "You forget that political liberty, the peace of a nation, and science itself, are gifts for which Fate demands a heavy blood tax. Great truths find vigor only in baths of blood. Christianity itself was not established without martyrs." This doctrine of blood was dinned into the ears of her hearer until he woke; and he was to be one of the builders of the new social edifice.

When the lawyer ceased speaking, the doctor awoke from a half-drunken stupor and exclaimed: "I, too, dreamed!" His dream was of a people he found in the leg of a patient he was about to amputate, and he was astonished to find someone to talk to in that leg. "When I first found myself in his skin, I discerned there an amazing number of tiny beings, moving,

thinking, and arguing. Some lived in the man's body and some in his mind. His ideas were creatures that were born, grew, and died; they were sick, gay, healthy, sad—and all had personal individuality. They fought or fondled. A few ideas flew forth and went to dwell in the world of intellect.

"Suddenly I understood that there are two worlds—the visible and the invisible universe; that the earth, like man, has a body and a soul. A new light was cast on nature, and I perceived its immensity when I saw the ocean of beings everywhere distributed in masses and in species, all of one and the same living matter, from marble rocks up to God. A magnificent sight! In short, there was a universe in my patient. When I inserted my lancet in his gangrened leg, I destroyed a thousand such beings."

When the bored company rose from the supper-table, Madame de Saint-James took the lawyer aside and said:

"Monsieur de Robespierre, will you do me the favor of seeing Monsieur Marat home? He is incapable of standing upright."

"With pleasure, Madame; I wish you had ordered me to do something more difficult."

A BACHELOR'S ESTABLISHMENT (1843)

(*La Rabouilleuse*)

One part of this book appeared as *Les Deux Frères* in *La Presse*, in 1841; and another in the same paper, in 1842, as *Un Ménage de Garçon en Province*. Then these were issued in book form in 1843. The second title was given to the book when it was included in the *Scènes de la Vie de Province;* but Balzac changed the title to *La Rabouilleuse* ("one who stirs up the waters of a brook"). Flore Brazier (*La Rabouilleuse*), Madame Bridau, Madame Descoings, and the Hochons appear solely in this book; Joseph Bridau, frequently met with in other volumes, is said to be a portrait of Eugène Delacroix, the painter. In the dedication to Nodier, Balzac said: "I have never, perhaps, drawn a picture which shows more clearly than this how indispensable the stability of marriage is to European society, what the sorrows are of woman's weakness, what dangers are involved in unbridled self-interest." The novel has been dramatized in French and in English.

IN 1792, a Dr. Rouget, who was regarded by the citizens as a very sly fox, lived in the town of Issoudun. As long as he lived, little was said about him and he was treated civilly. His wife, a Demoiselle Descoings, had first a son, Jean-Jacques, and, ten years later, a daughter, Agathe. The doctor's father-in-law and his wife, the Descoings, were rich wool-brokers. Their son, a younger brother of Madame Rouget, went to Paris and set up as a grocer in the Rue Saint-Honoré. He married the widow of Master Bixiou, his predecessor. Dr. Rouget, who did not expect his wife to live long, sent Agathe to Paris, hoping that the Descoings, who had no children, would take a fancy to her. Dr. Rouget wanted to disinherit his daughter, and thought it might be done if he transplanted her.

Agathe, the handsomest girl in Issoudun, resembled neither her father nor her mother. Her birth had occasioned a feud between Dr. Rouget and his friend, Monsieur Lousteau, who removed with his family from Issoudun. Madame Rouget confided her woes to Lousteau's sister, Madame Hochon, Agathe's godmother. Madame Rouget said: "I shall never see my

child again!" "And she was sadly right," Madame Hochon always remarked. Gossip said Dr. Rouget was killing his wife by inches. Her stupid son was a grief to her, for Jean-Jacques Rouget was like his father, only worse, and the doctor, as was said, was not very admirable.

Soon after Agathe arrived in Paris, her uncle, having been too rash of speech, was reported by Citoyenne Duplay to her lodger, Robespierre. The grocer was arrested. Madame Descoings knew Bridau, an under secretary; but he was unable to save Descoings, who perished on the scaffold. In the course of the few visits paid to Madame Descoings by Bridau, he became infatuated with Agathe and offered marriage. The delighted Dr. Rouget hurried to Paris to see that the settlements were drawn to his mind. Bridau, desperately in love, left this matter to the perfidious doctor. Old Monsieur and Madame Descoings had left their property to Madame Rouget, who died in 1799, and this money came into the hands of Dr. Rouget. His income was thirty thousand francs. After his wife's death, the doctor still led a dissolute life, but with more method, and in the privacy of home life. He died in 1805.

Agathe Rouget resembled Dr. Rouget's mother. Her portrait painted by her son showed an oval face with delicate features, blue eyes, and placid expression. She was an ideal housewife, trained by a country life, and never parted from her mother. She was pious without bigotry, and had no learning but such as the Church allows to women. She lived a pure, simple, and quiet life as the wife of Bridau, who attached himself fanatically to Napoleon. The latter made him head of a department of state in 1804. Rich with a salary of twelve thousand francs and very handsome presents, Bridau cared not at all for the disgraceful proceedings by which Agathe had been robbed. Six months before his death, old Rouget had sold part of his estate to his son, to whom he secured the remainder, in part by deed of gift and in part as his direct heir. An advance on her prospective inheritance of a hundred thousand francs secured under her marriage settlement represented the whole of Agathe's share in her father's and mother's fortunes.

Bridau idolized the Emperor. From 1804 to 1808 he lived in style in an apartment on the Quai Voltaire, near both to

his office and the Tuileries. Agathe was always relieved to relapse into provincial simplicity after enforced ceremonial splendor. In 1808 Bridau killed himself by overwork, just as Napoleon was about to promote him. The Emperor entered Madame Bridau's name on the Pension List for four thousand francs a year and charged the education of her two sons to the privy purse.

Agathe had had no communication with Issoudun, except a yearly letter from her godmother, Madame Hochon, who had begged her to let Monsieur Hochon look after her interests. She, however, had not wished to annoy her brother. With her pension and Bridau's investments, Agathe had six thousand francs a year. Madame Descoings, her uncle's widow, desired to live with Agathe: the two widows, therefore, joined their incomes. They had between them twelve thousand francs a year.

In 1809, Madame Descoings was sixty-five years old: she owned up to thirty-six! In the heyday of her charms she was called *La Belle Epicière.* She was of medium height, plump, with a fair warm complexion and chestnut hair. She was fond of cooking dainty dishes, loved the theater, and spent a great deal of money in dress, was attractive by reason of her gentle and contagious cheerfulness and she understood a joke; but Madame Descoings indulged one vice which she wrapped in the deepest mystery—she put money into the lottery. Since the death of the husband she had adored, Agathe cared for nothing but her two children.

Madame Descoings had a fancy for sets of three numbers, and she gradually increased her debt, surreptitiously borrowed from Agathe, always staking higher sums, hoping that the favorite combination, which had not come out in ten years, would cover the loss. Presently, the debt amounted to twenty thousand francs. She then wished to pledge her fortune to repay Agathe, but her lawyer showed her that Dr. Rouget had, at the death of his brother-in-law, her husband, taken over his liabilities and assets, indemnifying the widow by a life-annuity, charged on Jean-Jacques Rouget's estate. It was impossible to raise money on this annuity. With sobs, Madame Descoings confessed the state of affairs to her niece. Madame Bridau did not

reproach her. She sold out some of her securities, parted with her servants and furniture, paid all debts and gave up her apartment.

Madame Bridau now went to live in the Rue Mazarine, opposite the Palais de l'Institut. She rented the top floor, consisting of a small suite, with two little rooms for the boys under the roof. This apartment was simply furnished with a few necessary pieces saved from the wreck, a picture of Napoleon by Vernet, a portrait of Bridau, two large bird-cages—one full of canaries, the other of exotic birds—and cats slept in the arm-chairs. The dashing Madame Descoings occupied a similar apartment on the floor below. Her income was reduced to twelve hundred francs a year. The widows lived together; the aunt managed the dinner; and in the evening a few old friends—Bridau's clerks—came in to play cards. Madame Descoings still clung to her three numbers, hoping by a stroke of luck to repay all she had borrowed from her niece. Madame Bridau reduced her expenses to save what she could for her children. Thus the two widows had sunk from unreal opulence to voluntary penury—one under the influence of a vice, the other under the promptings of the purest virtue. None of these trivial things are foreign to the deep lesson to be derived from this story, founded on the sordid interests of common life.

Philippe, the elder of Madame Bridau's children, was strikingly like his mother; and, moreover, possessed, though fair-haired and blue-eyed, a daring look which was often mistaken for high spirit and courage. By dint of fighting at school, he acquired that hardihood and scorn of pain which gave rise to military courage. He hated study. From his purely superficial resemblance to her, Agathe inferred that they must agree in mind. Joseph, three years younger, was an ugly likeness of his father, with bushy, black, ill-kempt hair, and slovenly habits. The mother greatly preferred Philippe. She looked for wonders from Philippe; she founded no hopes on Joseph.

One day, in 1812, Joseph slipped into the courtyard of the Institute: he was fascinated with the statues, busts, and plaster studies, and his vocation seethed within him. Entering a room, where a dozen lads were drawing from a statue, he became the butt of their horse-play. The sculptor, Chaudet, coming in,

put a stop to their tortures, and, questioning the boy, found he wanted to be an artist. He told him to come to the studio as often as he pleased. Soon his progress was so great that his master, Lemire, came to Agathe to speak of her son's vocation; but, a true provincial and ignorant of art, she was horrified. Painting to her was a "beggar's trade."

Philippe was a spectator of Napoleon's review at the Tuileries, after the rout at Moscow. It turned his head. Unknown to his mother, he petitioned the Emperor to enroll him, saying he was the son of his favorite, Bridau. Within twenty-four hours Philippe was at Saint-Cyr; and in 1813 was made a sublieutenant in a cavalry regiment. He soon gained a lieutenancy; then a captaincy; and won the Cross. He witnessed Napoleon's farewell at Fontainebleau and refused to serve under the Bourbons. He was only nineteen. To his mother, he was a man of genius, while Joseph, small, sickly, loving peace and quiet and dreaming of fame as an artist, was doomed, she declared, "to give her nothing but worry and anxiety." In 1816, Philippe, fallen from the half-pay of major in the Emperor's Dragoon Guards, returned to his mother's apartment. Joseph, dependent on the two widows, had a studio in the loft. Joseph worshiped his mother; Philippe allowed her to adore him, and had a deep contempt for Joseph. Presently Philippe embarked for the United States to aid in founding the *Champ d'Asile*. Agathe paid ten thousand francs and went to Havre to see him off. Joseph advanced in his art; but the family had a terrible year of hardship. Philippe lost in the great swindle; whereupon, by means of family sacrifices, money was sent for his return. He came back a bully, a drinker, a smoker, rude, assertive, and deteriorated by penury and privations, but in appearance preserving the blunt, frank, easy-going manner of a soldier. He was a hero in his mother's eyes; but he had really become a rascal. He soon developed into a loafer and gambler, and getting intimate with a former captain of the Dragoon Guards, named Giroudeau, completed what Rabelais calls "the devil's outfit" by adding a fourth iniquity to his dram, his cigar, and his gambling. This Captain took Philippe to see Mademoiselle Florentine, a dancer, at whose house Philippe fell in love with another dancer, Marie Godeschal, whose stage name

was Mariette. Philippe now got in with a newspaper and theatrical set and lived a wild life. But before long Mariette attracted the attentions of a duke at Louis XVIII's court and threw over the rough and brainless soldier. Philippe was now deeply in debt. Moreover, he had borrowed from the cash-box of a newspaper. He told this to Joseph, adding that he intended to commit suicide. Joseph informed Madame Descoings, who told Agathe. The household was terrified. Philippe, however, went to the same cash-box and borrowed five hundred francs more, which he took to the gaming-table, and soon lost it all. Philippe then returned to the family roof, where the tearful, frightened women petted him and excused his behavior. He continued his life of dissipation and Joseph went on with his painting. Madame Descoings lavished her affection upon the young artist, but Agathe lived only in Philippe.

Madame Descoings still continued to stake on the same three numbers that had never yet been drawn. This set was now nearly twenty-one years old. It would soon be of age. Madame Descoings based high hopes on this trivial fact. She kept her savings sewed in the bottom mattress of her bed; and resolved to risk her all on the combinations of the three cherished numbers.

Joseph kept some of his savings in a skull that stood in an antique cabinet. His money disappeared so rapidly that he became suspicious. He found that Philippe was guilty of this petty theft; came to the conclusion that what some of the friends of the family said was right—Philippe was a scoundrel. Philippe next took money from the pocket of his mother's dress, while he thought her asleep; but she saw him. She then offered to give him money, and even tried to earn some by needlework; but it was impossible to supply Philippe's demands.

On Christmas Eve, when Agathe and Madame Descoings were both out, Philippe, needing money for the gaming-table, entered Madame Descoings's rooms and stole the twenty napoleons hidden in her mattress. With these he began playing, and at first he won. He paid Florentine the five hundred francs he owed her, and after a splendid supper returned to the tables and played for an hour. He doubled his winnings, and gained a hundred and fifty thousand francs; but then

luck turned, and at three o'clock in the morning he left the gambling-house a ruined man.

That same evening Joseph paid a visit to Madame Descoings. She told him about the monster stake on the famous ternion. Joseph wondered where the four hundred francs were to come from. "You will see," she said, and led Joseph to her bedroom. One look at the mattress, and the poor old woman fainted. Joseph called his mother and they worked over her. On coming to, she told them that all her savings were in the mattress and that she was confident that Philippe had taken them. Agathe begged her to take the family silver in repayment; but when the three opened the plate-box, a pawn-ticket was all that met their horrified gaze. Joseph then ran for his savings; but Maman Descoings heroically refused to accept them. Joseph, however, ran out to find a lottery-ticket office, but it was too late—they had all closed. The next morning, as they were having coffee, their old friend, Desrosches, came in to congratulate Madame Descoings on the success of her three numbers. He handed them the list: Joseph read it; Agathe read it; Madame Descoings read nothing: she fell back in her chair, stricken with apoplexy, and died in a few days. Philippe on his return excited the dying woman and was denounced by his mother and brother.

Agathe now begged Philippe to rejoin the army and gave him a hundred francs. He departed coldly, saying he was going to Florentine, Giroudeau's mistress. "They are real friends!" he added.

In 1822, Agathe was reduced so low that she had become a clerk in a lottery-ticket office. Her thoughts constantly turned to Philippe; and, at her request, Joseph went to ask him to sit for his portrait. Philippe came, and on one visit, stole a copy of a Rubens, thinking it was the original. After this last crime, Agathe never again mentioned Philippe. But the last blow was yet to fall. Philippe was concerned in a conspiracy of officers and arrested. Giroudeau told the widow that if she could raise twelve thousand francs Philippe might be released.

Madame Bridau then wrote to Madame Hochon, imploring her to beg Jean-Jacques Rouget to save Philippe; and should this prove impossible, would she herself lend the money?

Madame Hochon replied: "Though your brother has forty thousand francs a year, to say nothing of the money he has saved in the last seventeen years, which Monsieur Hochon estimates at more than six hundred thousand francs, he will not spend two farthings on the nephews he has never seen. As for me—as long as my husband lives, I shall never have six francs of my own. Hochon is the biggest miser in Issoudun. . . . I have not attempted to speak with your brother, who keeps a woman, whose very humble servant he is. It is pitiable to see how the poor man is treated in his own house when he has a sister and nephews. I have hinted to you several times that your presence at Issoudun might save your brother, and rescue from the clutches of that hussy forty or even sixty thousand francs a year." She invited Agathe to come to Issoudun, and added that there were rumors of a will to deprive her of her inheritance.

Desroches, Joseph's lawyer, advised him to hasten to Issoudun with his mother.

Issoudun afforded no diversions and the young men sought amusement at the expense of the town itself. In 1816 they formed a society—the "Knights of Idlesse"—for playing practical jokes; and in 1823 all Issoudun lived in terror of them. Their leader, Maxence Gilet, called Max for short, was supposed to be the son of Lousteau. Dr. Rouget also claimed him; but he was the son of neither. He had been a bad boy in the town, had run away and served in the army, been sent to the hulks, and now was a braggart and bully. He was also the man of fashion in Issoudun. Madame Hochon's two grandsons were his devotees; and through them Max learned of the expected visit of Madame Bridau. "Madame Hochon's goddaughter is Rouget's sister," said one of the company to Max; "if she and her son are coming here, it is no doubt to get back her share of the old man's fortune, and then good-by to your harvest." "If," said another, "old Rouget were to alter his will, supposing he has made one in favor of La Rabouilleuse—" But Max cut him short. He never allowed anyone to speak to him of Mademoiselle Flore Brazier, Jean-Jacques Rouget's servant-mistress. However, Max bethought himself of the danger of this threatened visit, with the result that the "Knights

of Idlesse," drinking a toast to the fair Flore, resolved to support Max against the Bridaus. Max went home to Rouget's house.

La Rabouilleuse commanded the bachelor's establishment. One day Dr. Rouget saw a little girl on the water-meadow. She was clad in a tattered petticoat of brown and white stripes; a sheet of paper formed her hat, beneath which escaped her beautiful golden hair. She replied to his questions that she came from Vatan, and added, "I *rabouille* for my Uncle Brazier there." *Rabouiller* is a local word of Le Berry, used to describe the beating of the waters with a racket (*rabouilloir*) to frighten the crayfish, that, rushing up-stream, are caught in the poacher's net. Dr. Rouget satisfied Brazier with money and "La Rabouilleuse" entered his house. She was seventeen when he died: he left her nothing. Jean-Jacques, who was in love with her, persuaded her to remain. In 1816 she fell in love with Maxence Gilet, and the penniless and ambitious officer saw something better than a mere love-affair in connection with La Rabouilleuse. He was more than content to lodge under Rouget's roof.

The news of the visit of the Bridaus was a bomb to Max and Flore: they formed plans to get Rouget's money and send the Bridaus away.

The Bridaus were welcomed at the Hochons'. Joseph and his mother were entertained at dinner, and Joseph went into raptures over the Italian paintings purchased by the Descoings for the sake of the frames. Max and Flore persuaded Rouget to give Joseph the valueless pictures. Joseph sent them to Paris; but he rashly boasted that they were worth a hundred and fifty thousand francs. This reached the Rouget household and they accused Joseph of unfair dealings.

On the last night of the Bridaus' stay Max was stabbed by Fario, a Spaniard, who had suffered from the pranks of the Knights. Max recognized Fario but accused Joseph, who was unfortunately strolling about at the time. His innocence was proved, and Joseph and Agathe returned to Paris.

Philippe was sentenced to police surveillance. Desroches got him sent to Issoudun, hoping he could rescue his uncle's fortune from Gilet.

"I sent your brother's pictures back to Monsieur Hochon, telling him to deliver them to you," said the lawyer. "You have an astute adversary—Max Gilet is brave—" "So much the better, a coward would run away," said Philippe, who was overjoyed at the prospect opening before him.

Max and Flore made light of the advent of Rouget's elder nephew. Philippe called on his uncle and asked him to come across to the Hochons' and identify his pictures. Max began to smell an enemy. Philippe, investigating his brother's arrest, and the history of Gilet and La Rabouilleuse, ended by forming an alliance with Fario. Flore resolved to collect bonds from Rouget, of whom she was heartily tired, and go to Paris, where she could be married to Max. Rouget refused to give her the securities, half suspecting her plans. Philippe called on his uncle and took him for a walk, alone, without Flore. Philippe then made him promise that he would not sign the papers Flore and Max were trying to get hold of. Philippe would reward him by "killing Max like a dog." In the meantime, Max sent Flore away, and Rouget, on his return, was in despair.

Philippe, however, succeeded in bringing Flore back, ousting Max and taking his place in the house. He brutally told Flore he was going to fight a duel with Max. In this duel Max was killed and Philippe wounded. Agathe hurried to Issoudun. Shortly afterward Flore Brazier, who had been ill after Max's death, was married to Jean-Jacques Rouget. On the following day Philippe took the bride aside and with terrible threats commanded her to get for him the power of attorney. "When once the securities are in my name," he said, "we shall have an equal interest in marrying each other some day. I may marry my aunt-in-law after a year's widowhood, whereas I could not marry a disreputable nobody." Flore quaked, but dared not oppose him.

Philippe next took Rouget and Flore to Paris and plunged them into the wildest dissipations. Rouget died after one of Florentine's splendid suppers. Philippe then married the widow; bought a fine house in Paris and also the estate of Brambourg, and gained permission to entail the property with the title of Count. He lived in the greatest style, gave splendid

entertainments, and was pitiless to the companions of his old debaucheries. One evening, on the way to an entertainment, at the Elysée-Bourbon, Philippe, dashing by in his carriage, patronizingly bowed to his mother and brother, splashing them with mud. The adoring mother still forgave him.

Philippe now wanted to get rid of his wife and marry the daughter of the Comte de Soulanges.

In the meanwhile Joseph had attained fame; but he was still in financial difficulties. His mother, too, was forced to work for her living. A tender letter from her to Philippe brought a brutal answer. She fainted on reading it, and became desperately ill. Agathe at last understood and gave her heart to Joseph during her last days. Philippe refused to visit his dying mother.

Soon after Agathe's death, a letter came to Joseph from the Comtesse Flore, asking his charity. Joseph and Bixion, grandson of Madame Descoings, found her in a garret, in rags, ill and emaciated. She had been cast off by Philippe and had gone from bad to worse. They sent her to a hospital, but she soon died. Bixion got an interview with the Comte de Soulanges, told him of Philippe's life and prevented the marriage.

Philippe played into the hands of two financiers who were gambling against him on the Bourse. Within a month nothing remained of his fortune but his house, estate, furniture, and pictures. He then went into active service and perished horribly in 1839, while fighting the Arabs.

Joseph, who had married an heiress, inherited Philippe's possessions and his title. He still continued to paint and greatly valued the collection of paintings which came with the estate, although he used to laugh at the title.

A START IN LIFE (1844)

(*Un Début dans la Vie*)

This story appeared first in *La Législture*, July 6 to September 4, 1842, under the title *Le Danger des Mystifications*. It was published in two volumes. The next year, with fourteen chapters suppressed, it entered the *Scènes de la Vie Privée* in the *Comédie Humaine*. Balzac wrote to Madame de Surville that it was one of the pearls of his crown.

N the year 1820, on the highroad from Paris to England, was a place named *La Cave* ("the cellar"), a hollow way leading down to one of the most delightful nooks of the Oise valley, and to the famous little town of l'Isle Adam, in a region renowned for its quarries, which have furnished materials for many fine buildings in Paris and Brussels. It being long before the day of railroads, the bit of road from Paris to l'Isle Adam was served by two *cou-cous*, heavy and grotesque chariot coaches, which ran to and fro alternately and put up, while in Paris, at the Silver Lion, at the corner of the Rue d'Enghien.

Pierrotin, who owned and drove one of these coaches, was an old soldier, a man of about forty, determined to advance in the world. The bulging sides of his vehicle allowed it to carry six passengers on two seats, which were as hard as iron, though covered with yellow worsted velvet. A wooden bar was so arranged that, although it was intended to form a support to the backs of the passengers, it might be turned at a pinch into an extra seat. This board, while painful to adjust, was more painful when adjusted and was the cause of despair to travelers. Pierrotin was of an ambitious and frugal nature, and continually talked of a grand new conveyance which he had ordered to be built at a standard maker's. He drove two horses—a large but slow and aged beast named Rougeot, and Bichette, a tiny mare that ate little and could go like the wind.

Early one autumn morning Pierrotin stood in front of the Silver Lion, his hands in his blouse pockets, looking up and down the square. It was near time for starting, but no passengers had arrived. This was hard, for the grand coach so long talked about was actually finished, and was advertised to make its first trip the succeeding Sunday. Pierrotin had deposited fifteen hundred francs, and unless he could raise the remaining thousand by that date, he would lose not only his coach but his money as well. Therefore his twinkling eyes looked anxiously around for passengers.

Presently a footman appeared with a small leather trunk, and told Pierrotin that his master wished to take passage if he could wait a quarter of an hour. Pierrotin could indeed wait, but who was his master? His master was a comte, a statesman, who wished to visit his estate at Presles, and who desired to go *incognito*. It must be no other than the Comte de Sérizy, intending to take his steward, Moreau, by surprise. The footman admitted this, but appealed to the driver not to betray his identity. Pierrotin was too much a man of the world not to oblige a nobleman, but there was heaviness in his heart on account of his friend Moreau, who, while managing his master's estate magnificently, had found ways to enrich himself. There was a particular rumor in regard to a farm, wholly enclosed in the estate, long desired by the Comte, which a certain farmer Léger had held on a long lease from the owner, Margueron, which lease was about to expire. Léger conceived the idea of buying the land from Margueron himself, and selling it again to the Comte through Moreau, both making a fine percentage on the transaction. Owing to a somewhat too zealous letter from Moreau in the matter, the Comte had consulted his attorney, Monsieur Crottat, who had advised his going in person, quietly, asking Margueron to dinner, and closing the business himself. M. Crottat added that he would send his clerk down with a form of sale, thus insuring the transaction and frustrating the steward's designs. Immediately following this advice had come a visit from Madame de Reybert, wife of a retired army officer living at Presles, who desired the stewardship for her husband, and was much incensed at the Moreaus, who carried themselves arrogantly toward

many of the townspeople, giving corroborative information in regard to the proposed sale and setting forth her husband's claims to the place held by Moreau.

This visit had decided the Comte to follow his attorney's advice, and, anticipating an expected visit, he was about to take a seat in the public vehicle. Naturally Pierrotin did not know all these details, but the little he did know gave him apprehension when he learned of the Comte's journey.

Monsieur de Sérizy was one of the great nobles of France and seldom traveled outside his own coach. Moreau's father had been of service to the Sérizy family during the Revolution; he had married a former maid of the Comtesse, and had been treated with much consideration by the Comte. He had served the latter faithfully, in spite of his shrewdness, and the Comte was loth to believe in his dishonesty. The Comte and Comtesse had recently been making alterations at Presles, preparatory to taking possession themselves after a long time of non-residence. The Moreaus, particularly Madame Moreau, had carried themselves very nearly as owners of the estate, and people wondered how they would like returning to the condition of upper servants. They were, in truth, looking to a different destination. Moreau had saved so much that they meant to buy a small estate in l'Isle Adam, and for this reason Moreau was especially anxious to gain the profit on the sale.

The Comte de Sérizy was truly a great man, who worked incessantly for the good of the State, to the detriment of his health. He was much older than the Comtesse, whom he adored. She was a beauty, who was a widow before he married her. She remained mistress of herself after as well as before her second marriage, but retained her fascination for her husband, who treated her as a mother treats a spoiled child. He was not happy, but he buried himself in his work, and by the protection of his great name and distinguished devotion prevented the gossip that her conduct might otherwise have provoked. She, in turn, held him in highest esteem.

Slowly the travelers gathered for the trip in Pierrotin's coach. First appeared a woman, once handsome but now shabby in her poverty, accompanied by her son, who showed evidences of a mother's hand in his attire, which was patched

and outgrown. She commended this lad to Pierrotin's care, and gave him maternal injunctions as to his behavior, which embarrassed him. These two were Madame Clapart and Oscar Husson, her son by a former marriage. Madame Clapart had been one of the Aspasias of the Directory, but was now living in extreme poverty with her incapable husband, her only friend being the Presles steward, Moreau, whom she had known in her youth, who constantly visited her and made her substantial presents of produce from his farm. The boy, Oscar, was of an age when ignorance and folly combined to make him absurd. Moreau had suggested a trip to his own home as an eye-opener to life, and this journey was the result.

After the mother and son came two young men, gay and well dressed in the extreme of fashion. Oscar listened to their witty comments on his own and his mother's appearance in an agony of shame, and begged her to shorten her farewells and advice. A stout farmer arrived, and two other young men, and Pierrotin began packing them into the coach and put up the wooden bar. It was past the time for starting, but Pierrotin lingered, making one excuse and another. At last an elderly man with a red face and very white hair arrived and took the last place inside. This was the Comte himself, and Pierrotin recognized him, but the others took him for no one in particular, as he was plainly dressed and unpretentious in manner. The coach-doors were then closed, and with much noise and bustle the comical vehicle was off.

In a French coach, the passengers, after they take some preliminary observations of each other, all talk. One of the well-dressed young men, Georges by name, quickly decided that he was the superior man of the party, and set out to amuse himself by hoaxing them. He told them that he had been in command of the troops under Ali, the Pasha of Janina. His tales increased in splendor as the others interpolated ejaculations, and he wound up by describing his seraglio in the East and his sensations at the battle of Waterloo. The Comte took this in with a twinkling eye, and, observing the name "Maître Crottat" on his portfolio, took advantage of the descent of the others to get luncheon at an inn to peep inside this portfolio. He there discovered the deed of sale intended for his purchase of the

Molineaux farms, which proved the young man to be the attorney's clerk. The Comte quietly appropriated this paper and closed the portfolio again.

On reëntering the coach, one of the other young men followed Georges's example, and amused the company with relating his adventures. He declared himself to be Schinner, the great painter, and told tales of Venice and his amours and escapades there. The Comte, greatly amused, put in an occasional comment. Oscar felt his spirits sink in envy and tried smoking a cigar, which made him ill.

At last the conversation turned on the projected sale of the farms. The Comte in an undertone reminded Pierrotin of his wish to remain *incognito*, and promised to pay the whole thousand francs for his new coach if he would keep still and let the others talk to their hearts' content. The old farmer, who was Léger himself, had not been able to refrain from boasting of his intended bargain, and between the gettings out and in to relieve the horses up the hills, and the various conversations with innkeepers, he got full evidence of his steward's dishonesty, to his great sorrow.

Oscar became more excited as the conversation turned on matters of which he knew something. Finally, exasperated at their slighting tone toward himself, he dashed in and informed the assembly that he was intended for a career of diplomacy. He was of noble blood, he said. They jeered at him, and reminded him of his mother's shabby appearance. He then declared her to be the housekeeper, and that he was going to Presles on a visit to the Comte de Sérizy. "Schinner" blushed at this, and the others looked at him with interest. Elated at having at last made an impression, he totally lost his head and betrayed the most intimate secrets of the Comte's life, the facts of which he had overheard during Moreau's confidential talks with his mother, Madame Clapart. When he at last made some comment on the Comtesse, the Comte stopped him in a voice of thunder, and almost immediately left the coach, making ironical farewells to the passengers, but without disclosing his identity. When they reached Presles, no one felt quite comfortable, except Pierrotin, who looked forward on the morrow to his thousand francs and his new coach.

The Comte was indeed wounded to the depths of his heart. The dishonesty of his steward appeared slight in his estimation compared with the discussion of the tragedies of his own sorrows, which must have taken place for this boy to have got hold of them. He wept bitter tears, his last, as he pursued his way through a by-path to his estate.

The master dropped on the household at Presles like a shell from a mortar. He approached the gamekeeper's hut and said:

"Is Moreau here? I see his horse waiting."

"No, Monseigneur, but as he is going over to Les Moulineux before dinner, he left his horse while he ran over to give some orders at the house."

At this confirmation of the steward's guilt, the Comte ordered the gamekeeper to go immediately to Farmer Margueron with a note demanding his immediate presence at dinner, forestalling the steward, whom he encountered shortly afterward, to the latter's confusion.

"Well, Monsieur," said the Comte, who remained sitting, but allowed Moreau to stand, "so we cannot come to terms with Margueron."

"At the present moment he wants too much for his farm."

"But why should he not come over here to talk about it?"

"He is ill, Monseigneur——"

"Monsieur," said the Comte, assuming a terrible expression, "what would you do to a man whom you had allowed to see you dress a wound, and who went off to make game of it with a street trollop?"

"I should give him a sound thrashing."

"Listen, Monsieur Moreau. You have, I suppose, discussed my affairs with Madame Clapart, for little Husson was giving to the passengers in a public conveyance information about them this very morning. In addition, I heard from Farmer Léger's own lips of the plan concocted with regard to the farms at Molineux. . . . It is unpardonable. To strike at a man's interest is nothing, but to strike at his heart! Ah, you do not know what you have done."

The Comte covered his face and was silent for a moment.

"I will leave you in possession of what you have. As a

point of dignity, we will part without quarreling. I cannot forget what your father did for mine."

The Comte and Moreau went downstairs, Moreau as white as the Comte's hair, M. de Sérizy calm and dignified.

The Comte, somewhat later, put through the sale with Margueron, and entertained his whilom companions at dinner, rallying them on their efforts at amusement, and displaying the deed of sale to the crestfallen Georges, taken, unknown to him, from his own portfolio, in the presence of M. Crottat, who had come down himself by a later coach; as well as congratulating the noble Schinner, who turned out to be Joseph Bridau, a young artist sent down to do some of the decorating.

Oscar, dumb with misery and helpless with fright, was dragged into the Comte's presence by the enraged Moreau, to be dismissed with contempt by the nobleman and later sent home to his mother, with a note relating the affair, and telling her that she need expect no more assistance from the humiliated steward in his education, as he was hopeless from stupidity and conceit.

Madame Clapart was in despair at her son's return and the news that he had lost Moreau's friendship and patronage, for to the latter she had looked for the young man's start in life. There was but one possible direction in which she could now turn: this was to her first husband's brother-in-law, a retired silk-merchant, Monsieur Cardot. This old gentleman had settled the silk business, a flourishing concern, on his eldest daughter, whose husband, Camusot, managed it admirably, and had given portions of four hundred thousand francs each to his younger children. In addition to this, he had settled a large sum on himself in an annuity, so that he was able to live in great comfort in his old age. This little old gentleman, plump, rosy, square, and hearty, was always as neat as a pin, and was a person of much gallantry toward the ladies. He, in fact, amused himself quietly, for to him the charming Mademoiselle Florentine, of the *Comédie*, looked for support. Madame Clapart had always been on the polite terms of the poor relation, and never had asked him for help. But this was her only course in the present emergency. Accordingly, she and her son called one morning, and, finding M. Cardot in his

garden, were invited to stay to breakfast. She found him to be unexpectedly good-natured, and he promised to pay Oscar's expenses in studying law, mingling the promise with salutary advice; for he had been a hard worker in his younger years and knew the principles of success.

Accordingly, Oscar was introduced to Monsieur Desroches, a hard-working attorney, and began a career of great industry, which he hated, but could not escape from. He worked diligently in this office for two years, being under the particular charge of Godeschal, the head clerk, a young man of good principles, who took a friendly interest in keeping the boy up to the mark. Oscar, however, longed for some variety and fun, and on the appearance of Georges Marest at the office, the young man who had so influenced him to boasting while on the journey to Presles, he became more and more restless under the restraints of drudgery and hard work.

Frederic Marest, Georges's cousin, was the latest clerk to appear in the office. He was summoned to give the *Bienvenue*, or welcome, the breakfast which every new pupil must give the old boys, according to the traditions of Parisian law-offices. Godeschal left a book, contrived ingeniously to appear an ancient ritual of office customs, on Frederic's desk. He looked at it, laughed, but did not take the hint. Georges appeared soon afterward, and told them his cousin would not ask them to breakfast, but that he would invite them to a supper at the grand Marquise de la Florentina's. This lady, put forward as a Spanish aristocrat, was only the Mademoiselle Florentine who was the pet and favorite of old M. Cardot, and who contrived to amuse herself very well with Georges Marest and his gay set of friends. The clerks, delighted with this invitation, accepted in a body.

Oscar, while hating his work, had done it faithfully, and had come to be looked upon with respect by his employer. Maître Desroches, the day of the supper, had given him five hundred francs to take to a client. By some mischance, he had not been able to conclude this business, and was obliged to carry the money to the supper at Mademoiselle Florentine's. Oscar looked forward to a day of perfect bliss. He had new and grand clothes, and he was going to see the world of fashion for

the first time. Apart from this, however, he had an instinctive dislike of Georges Marest, who was so closely connected with the circumstances of his great humiliation at Presles.

This dislike melted away as the twelve young men sat at the gay supper-table, and later were led into the sumptuous rooms of the pseudo Marquise. The wine went to the poor boy's head, and the scene dazzled his vision. When the cards were produced, he easily put up a hundred francs, his entire property, and naturally lost it at once. Tempted then, beyond resistance, he put up his employer's five hundred francs, and this also, in the ups and downs known so well to gamblers, was forfeited, together with a thousand francs more, borrowed from the good-natured Florentine. Dazed, bewildered, and despairing, overcome with champagne, at the end of the evening Oscar sank in a deep sleep on a sofa, where he was allowed to stay, and soon was forgotten by all.

About eleven o'clock in the morning he was awakened by a terrible sound—the rasping voice of Papa Cardot, chiding pretty Florentine for her extravagance. She had managed to fool the old gentleman back into good humor, when he caught sight of his protégé, whom he had recommended to a life of hard work and self-denial, extended on the sofa. An admirable scene ensued, as Florentine pulled the young man up by the elbow and half choked with laughing as she saw the hangdog look of uncle and nephew.

"You here, nephew?"

"Ho, ho, he is your nephew. Whatever is to become of the poor boy?"

"Whatever he pleases," said the old man dryly.

"Wait a moment, Papa Cardot. Who is to pay the fifteen hundred francs he owes?"

Cajoled and threatened by Florentine, Cardot handed his nephew five hundred francs, with which to repay his master, and told him to begone and never show himself to him again, promising scornfully to repay Florentine herself the thousand she had lent him.

Oscar was indeed miserable, deprived of his last benefactor; and when at last, by some mischance, Desroches discovered his theft before he had time to repay it with his uncle's

money, and discharged him peremptorily, his misfortunes, induced by his own folly, were at the crushing point.

Oscar, to his mother's despair, was thus brought to the last resort of a French youth and obliged to enlist as a common soldier. Humbled and sobered, he followed faithfully from this time the precepts of wisdom and common sense. His conduct was so satisfactory that he became quartermaster in his regiment at the age of twenty-five, and by an act of great bravery, in which he lost an arm, gained the cross of the Legion of Honor and the rank of lieutenant-colonel. In this action his superior officer was the son of the Comte de Sérizy, and in this way the Comte was led to forgive him his folly on the ride to Presles.

Years afterward, there was another ride from Paris to Presles, the same passengers finding themselves together once more. It was hard to recognize in the one-armed, bronzed Oscar, carrying his mother proudly on his arm, the foolish boy who had played the bravado years before. Georges Marest was there also, showing by his shabby gentility that he had run through his income of thirty thousand francs a year. Joseph Bridau, now a painter of renown, was going down to marry the daughter of Farmer Léger, who had become a millionaire and had married the daughter of Reybut, Moreau's successor. Monsieur and Madame Moreau occupied the coupé, together with their daughter and son-in-law, the Baron de Canalis, a peer of France. The ex-steward had prospered by his shrewdness, and his wife had seen her social ambitions all gratified.

As for Oscar, under the powerful patronage of the Sérizy family, he was going down to take the office of Collector at Presles. Later he would be promoted to be Receiver-General. He married Pierrotin's daughter. The former driver had acquired the ownership of the entire diligence system and was able to give his daughter a fine dowry. The Camusots, Oscar's relatives, recognized him, and his mother had the pleasure of seeing her son a respected and successful man. The results of the journey to Presles had given him discretion, the evening at Florentine's had disciplined his honesty, the hardships of military life had taught him the value of social distinctions and submission to fate. He became prudent, capable, and consequently happy.

MODESTE MIGNON (1844)

This story was first printed in the *Journal des Débats*, in three numbers. It appears, from a long letter written early in that year, to Madame Hanska, *l'Etrangère*, to whom the story is dedicated, that the central idea of it was hers, rather than Balzac's. He actually wished her to write the story and let him print it over his own name. Many efforts have been made to discover who sat to Balzac for the portrait of De Canalis. Opinions fluctuate between Lamartine and Chateaubriand. It is most probable that the picture is composite.

CHARLES MIGNON, the last survivor of the family to whom Paris owes the street and the hotel built by Cardinal Mignon, had for his father a crafty man who wished to save his estate of La Bastie (a fief under the counts of Provence) from the clutches of the Revolution. He therefore vanished on the 9th of Thermidor, was placed on the list of *émigrés*, and the fief of La Bastie was sold. But he was discovered at Orange and killed, with his wife and all his children, with the exception of one son, Charles, who thus became the sole representative of the ancient family. When this young man came to the age of three-and-twenty, he had developed into a fine and noble youth, with a beauty of person equal to that of Antinoüs. He entered the army, and there met and formed a friendship with Anne François Dumay, a young *bourgeois*. The two were friends through many adventures in the wars of Napoleon, having passed through imprisonment in Siberia together, and proved each other in a devotion that should last through life.

In one of the episodes of war, Charles Mignon had been quartered at Frankfort-on-the-Main, where he had won the love of the beautiful heiress, Bettina Wallenrod, and married her. They had four children, of whom but two daughters survived. Bettina's father became involved in unfortunate investments and died just before Charles's return from Napoleon's last terrible expedition to Russia, in 1815. Thus

Charles found himself with his wife's dowry as the sole capital with which to begin life again. He decided on a banker's and shipowner's career, and chose Havre as the field of his operations. He became very successful, and after some years built a beautiful villa at Ingouville, that suburb of Havre which, built high in terraces, overlooks the sea. Somewhat lower than the Villa Mignon, he built a charming little châlet for the occupation of his friend Dumay, giving him a lease for twelve years. After some years of prosperity he failed, in consequence of a series of disasters, and was obliged to sell the villa and grounds to a Monsieur Vilquin. The lease he had given to Dumay, however, held good, and his wife and two daughters, Bettina and Modeste, found there a comfortable though unpretentious home. Charles Mignon, with indomitable courage, immediately embarked on a voyage to the East, determined to retrieve his fortunes, leaving his family in charge of the faithful Dumay, together with the task of discharging all the obligations of the firm.

There was the beginning of a tragedy in the Mignon family, even before Charles Mignon sailed away. The oldest daughter, Bettina, beautiful with a dark Spanish beauty, had been induced to leave her home with a young man who had been the privileged guest of her father and mother. This betrayal of all the sacredness of hospitality had filled the father's heart with bitterness. The family had managed to make excuses for the daughter's absence, saying that she had been sent south for her health. When the financial disaster came she was still away from home, and Charles, in parting from the faithful Dumay, gave him as an inviolable trust his remaining daughter, Modeste, to be guarded from ever speaking to a young man, or even looking upon one. After her father's failure and departure, the elder daughter, Bettina, returned, ill indeed, and deserted by her lover, only to die in the little châlet. At this crowning misfortune of her life, the gentle mother had yielded to a month of solitude and weeping, with the result that her eyes gave way and she became totally blind.

It was a sad and simple little household in which Modeste grew from girlhood to womanhood. Fulfilling her father's orders, Dumay guarded her from all male society. His in-

junctions were absolute. "If any man, of whatever age or rank, speaks to her," he said, "he is a dead man. I will blow his brains out and surrender myself to the public prosecutor."

Modeste grew into a type of exquisite and angelic beauty, devoted herself to her blind mother, and satisfied the cravings of an active and imaginative mind with indiscriminate reading. The notary and his wife, Monsieur and Madame Latournelle, and a man named Gobenhiem, came nearly every evening for a rubber of whist, and at half-past ten the party would break up for the night. Butscha, a dwarf, and clerk in the notary's office, came also, frequently.

Thus guarded, it would seem that the demon of unrest could never enter the young girl's heart. But one day, while Madame Dumay, the American wife of the faithful guardian, was giving Modeste the little diversion of a long walk, Madame Mignon held council with her only friends, Madame Latournelle, the notary, and Dumay.

"Listen, my friends," she said, "my daughter is in love. I feel it. I see it. A strange change has come over her."

"Bless my stars!" Dumay exclaimed.

"Do not interrupt me. For the last two months Modeste has dressed herself with care, as if she were going to meet someone. She has become excessively particular about her shoes. Some days the poor child is gloomy and watchful, and then again she is gay. You cannot discern these shades. Her cheerfulness betrays itself in the tones of her voice. Oh, my friends, I have learned to know happiness as well as grief. By the kiss my poor Modeste gives me I can guess what is going on in her mind. Though I am blind, my affection is clairvoyant, and I implore you—watch my daughter!"

At this, all constituted themselves spies over poor Modeste. She never was alone for a moment. But they could find no accusing clue. Unless she were in love with the nightingales in Vilquin's park, or with some goblin prince, she could have seen no one.

None of the persons about the girl understood her, for, in truth, her heart and her lovely, innocent face were in unison. She had transplanted her life into the world of the imagination. She could be silent, or she would have been thought mad. She

had learned the world's ways by observing the conduct of friends who had thrown the family over after their loss of wealth, including the man to whom her father had betrothed her. Her sister, in dying, had given her glimpses of what love is and had said words that had sunk deep in the girl's heart. She lived entirely in her imagination, creating to satiety lovers, experiences, and adventures for herself. This satiety flung her at last into a love of goodness and of heaven. She fancied that by becoming irreproachable, in the Catholic sense, she might achieve such saintliness that God would grant her desires. "I only ask God to send me a husband," thought she.

She adored genius. She longed to become the wife of some great man, to sink her life in his, to sacrifice herself to his greatness. Her world of feeling finally took shape in the determination to marry an artist or a poet; but first to subject him to thorough study before giving him her heart.

She thus led a double life. While performing her simple duties, her mind was definitely fixing her fate. Madame Mignon, who read her soul, was right. Modeste was in love, but only with that Platonic sentiment so rare—the first illusion of girlhood, the subtlest of feelings, the heart's daintiest morsel.

A trifling, foolish accident sealed her fate. On a bookseller's counter one day she saw a portrait of De Canalis, one of her favorite poets. She at once chose him to love, as fulfilling her dreams. But was he married? Taking her maid into her confidence, she posted a letter to his publisher, politely requesting him to let her know, in the interests of the poet, whether he were married or no. This person could hardly take the matter seriously, and placed the letter in the hands of several journalists, who concocted a reply, asserting with much rodomontade that he was a bachelor, and commenting on his circumstances, his political standing, and other details.

Modeste was not discouraged by this, but began a correspondence, which the foppish poet regarded with indifference and handed over to his friend and secretary, Ernest de la Brière, a man of sensibility and worth of soul. In the secretary's reply to Modeste's first note he tried to dissuade her from a correspondence with an unknown poet, telling her that a poet was but a man, and in this instance a Parisian, and

that her appreciation of his genius might be misunderstood. Modeste replied to this in a manner showing qualities of mind and heart so rare, although in her girlish innocence she said many unwise things, that De la Brière became more and more interested, and finally, totally forgetting that he was playing the part of poet, he went down to Havre one day and followed the maid as she took the letter from the post, and saw Modeste at a window. He returned to Paris, resolving that, rich or poor, if she had a noble soul he would gladly make her Madame de la Brière; and he determined to carry on the correspondence.

Many letters passed between Modeste and the young De la Brière, masquerading under the name of De Canalis, the poet. The poor private secretary's really heroic feelings gave themselves rein in these letters, and the young girl poured forth her soul with no reserve. At last she bade De la Brière come to Havre the next Sunday, and to be at service in the cathedral with a white rose in his buttonhole, that she might see him before promising to marry him. De la Brière, who was handsome, dressed himself with care, not forgetting the rose, and obeyed her behest. Modeste, in the greatest agitation, disguised herself as an old woman, and, attending service, saw the adorable De Canalis, as she believed him to be, and found in his appearance the complete realization of her dreams. The sight of his melancholy and pleasing personality, dressed in the latest of Parisian fashions, removed her last doubt, and she determined to send the letter that should give him the right to claim her as his wife.

Just at this time Monsieur Dumay received a letter from Charles Mignon containing the information that he was returning with a fortune of seven million francs. He bade Dumay to keep secret the fact of his great wealth, admitting that he had made a modest fortune, and told him that his intention was to choose desirable sons-in-law, and to petition the King to settle his name and titles upon one of these latter. At the time of writing he did not know of the death of his oldest daughter, Bettina. He intended, he wrote, to land at Marseilles, to publish the report that his daughters would have about two hundred thousand francs' dowry, and to devote himself to deciding

which of his sons-in-law should be most worthy to inherit the real wealth, titles, and repurchased estate of La Bastie.

Modeste was happy at the thought of her father's return, but disturbed that her dowry was to be no larger. She had written her supposed poet that she was to have six millions of francs; for, although he had written that he had hoped to find her poor, as it was his wish to make his own fortune rather than to depend on a wife, she longed to endow him with wealth. She was ecstatically happy, and her joy overflowed in musical improvisation, an art in which she was skilled to the verge of genius. Her joyous moods and wonderful singing filled her guardians with suspicion, particularly her ever-brooding mother. They talked much about the mysterious lover, who seemed so certainly to be the object that inspired these manifestations, but who was so elusive. The appearance of the fashionably dressed stranger at church had not escaped their observation. Suspicion turned in his direction, but La Butscha, the dwarf, who loved Modeste with an all-consuming passion himself, became her friend and ally and declared this person to have been an architect come down to estimate some repairs.

Having seen the supposed De Canalis, Modeste wrote an imprudent letter, fully abandoning the reserve she had hitherto preserved and confessing fully the love in her heart. At the same time she wrote one to her father. On going out to post them, she met Dumay, and at his demand gave him the letter she had written to her lover, supposing it to be the one for her father. In this way the whole truth came out, and Modeste proudly acknowledged everything.

Dumay at once set out for Paris to face De Canalis. In the meantime, De la Brière had written Modeste a letter, in which he confessed his masquerading, and told of his deep love for her and his hope that she was poor, so that he might aspire to win her.

Dumay, on reaching Paris, found De Canalis living in sumptuous style in a fashionable quarter. Intimidated by such magnificence, he asked him his intentions in regard to Mademoiselle Mignon. The poet scornfully assured him of his ignorance of such a person, and pointed to a casket, full of adoring letters from lovely women, which he declared himself

to be too noble to destroy or to use for lighting his cigars. Dismayed, the old soldier took his leave.

De la Brière then entered the poet's room and confessed his part in the affair, adding that he was fortunate in it, as he had not only won a lovely girl, but a fortune of six million francs as well, as he had just heard from a banker that she was daughter of Comte de la Bastie, and would have that sum. Her father was in Paris and had sent for him to come and see him. De Canalis was instantly stricken with regret that he should have missed this glorious fate, and was furious at his ill luck, in that he had not detected the golden gleam under the first anonymous letter of poor Modeste.

The Comte de la Bastie had heard from Dumay the particulars of his eldest daughter's death, his wife's blindness, and Modeste's imbroglio. He was a stricken man, but the one ray of hope was in the excellent character of the young De la Brière. He received the lover with dignity. During a long conversation he detected his worth, and told him his daughter should be his. Then De la Brière confessed the deception he had practised. The Count assured him that that was something beyond his jurisdiction. His daughter believed herself to be in love with a poet. It was for her to overlook or not the fraud that had been worked upon her. Fixing upon him a keen look, he said that there was but one thing to do. That was for himself and the poet to go down to Havre in their true characters, telling him at the same time that Modeste had but two hundred thousand francs, and pledging him not to reveal this latter fact to De Canalis, and let Modeste choose between them herself.

The two young men accordingly prepared for an extended visit at Havre, De Canalis believing Modeste to have six million francs and De la Brière two hundred thousand. De Canalis took a magnificent villa and many servants, giving out that he needed the baths, and bringing with him his friend and secretary, Monsieur de la Brière.

Before their arrival, Charles Mignon took his daughter for a walk and talked long and kindly to her of her imprudence, and endeavored to show her the real value of De la Brière, with whom she was incensed to fury because of his deception.

Thus there were to be two avowed suitors for the hand of

Mademoiselle Mignon, to whom was immediately added a third, the Duc d'Hérouville, adorned with many titles and an impoverished purse. This young man had some noble qualities, but was small and timid, and had two elderly sisters who were of an indomitable family pride and determined to marry him to Modeste and her reputed millions and title. She perceived his value as an offset to the pretensions of De Canalis and De la Brière, for her intelligence was fully awake now to the fact that her love and pride had been cruelly wounded in the trick played upon her. The comedy of *The Heiress* about to be played at the châlet might truly be called by the name Modeste gave it in jest, a competition, for she was resolved, after the overthrow of her illusions, to give her hand only to the man whose character should prove thoroughly satisfactory.

De Canalis at first carried off all the honors. Parisian to the core, man of the world, handsome and a *poseur*, a poet, adored and flattered by the great Duchesse de Chaulieu, his patroness, with a gift of conversation and a habit—all-conquering in the salons of Paris—of declaiming his own verse, the actual poet captured the girl's fancy nearly as the imagined one had by correspondence. Through her skilful handling of the affair, however, all were somewhat in doubt, and De la Brière became more and more the victim of a true devotion.

One evening he was walking alone by the sea, indulging his unhappiness, when the dwarf Butscha joined him, and told him much that he had learned in his visit to Paris concerning the private life of De Canalis. He confessed his own love for Modeste and his determination to watch over her. He had discovered, by talking with his cousin, the Duchesse de Chaulieu's maid, that this great lady would never forgive De Canalis his desertion of herself, and that the latter was a ruined man unless he married Modeste and her millions. Butscha opened this conversation for the purpose of drawing out the secretary and discovering still more, if possible, of De Canalis's character; for his love for Modeste was so great that he determined to see to it for himself that she married a man worthy of her.

Later, the devoted dwarf had a conversation with Modeste in which he showed her that he read her soul like a book, and

asked her whether, should she discover a change in De Canalis when he learned of the smallness of her real fortune, she would still insist upon making him her husband. The girl did not reply, but Butscha knew he had planted a thought in her mind.

Butscha accordingly spread the rumor that Charles Mignon's fortune was greatly overrated, and that Modeste would have a dowry of but two hundred thousand francs. This news caused De Canalis instantaneously to change and to withdraw his suit. He wrote a long letter to the Duchesse de Chaulieu, whose favor he hoped it was not yet too late to regain.

Eléonore, Duchesse de Chaulieu, was a *grande dame*, who retained her magnificent beauty, unimpaired, at the age of fifty-six. Made wretched and furious at the desertion of De Canalis, she gladly believed in the sincerity of his words of repentance. The rumor came to her ears that Modeste was rich but not beautiful, so she was all the more inclined to forgive the recreant poet.

She accordingly wrote De Canalis a magnanimous letter, in which she informed him that she had intended to marry him to Mademoiselle de la Bastie, whom she understood from her father's banker to be worth eight thousand francs. De Canalis, once more upset in his calculations, tore off that part of the letter relating to the Duchess's wish to marry him to Modeste, and gave it to the latter, in order to prove to her that his relations with the Duchess were simply those of friendship, and strove by judicious behavior to regain the ground he had lost.

De la Brière had given Modeste a magnificent riding-whip, whose jeweled handle had cost him all his savings. This the girl had coldly resigned to her father's keeping. The D'Hérouville faction were making active efforts to win, and had arranged that her father and she should receive an invitation to a royal hunt in Normandy, where her head should be turned with the magnificence of what the Duke could command for his wife.

At this hunt all the opposing factions met. The Duchesse of Chaulieu, on beholding the amazing beauty of Modeste, hated her, and showed her hatred as only a great lady can, under the mask of graciousness. She gave De Canalis to understand that it must be a choice between her and the beautiful heiress. De Canalis, greatly agitated that Modeste still pos-

sessed the part of the letter the Duchess had written, announcing her intention of marrying him to her, implored his friend De la Brière to get it for him from the girl, as if the Duchess discovered it to be in her possession all would be over for him.

The secretary approached Modeste, and walking down the superb suite of apartments placed at the disposal of herself and her father, made known the poet's desire. Modeste made no objection and gave the incriminating scrap of paper into his hand, with a good-natured but contemptuous message for the poet, whose character she now thoroughly understood.

The aristocratic society gathered at this hunt pleased Modeste. She instinctively assimilated everything that gave distinction to the Duchesses of Maufrigneuse and De Chaulieu; but, in the midst of this Olympus, she discovered that her father and De la Brière were infinitely superior to De Canalis. The great poet, abdicating his claim to real and indisputable power —that of the intellect—was nothing but a Master of Appeals, eager to become a Minister, anxious for a collar of the Legion of Honor, and obliged to subserve every constellation. Ernest de la Brière, devoid of ambition, was simply himself, while her father, the Comte de la Bastie, proud of his services and of the Emperor Napoleon's esteem, was simple in dignity and easy in speech. Feeling her regard for De la Brière deepen, Modeste felt it her duty to put an end to the struggle the Duc d'Hérouville was making for the honor of her hand, and, telling him at the same time that he had no firmer friends than her father and herself, she spoke truthfully as to the state of her real feelings toward him. To her little speech the Duke replied with dignity:

"You are a noble girl, and, though it breaks my heart to be no more than your friend, I shall glory in the title, and prove it to you wherever and whenever I find occasion."

On the occasion of a grand hunt, the Duchesse de Chaulieu, feeling it beneath her dignity to sulk longer with a young person of Modeste's pretensions, when the victory in regard to De Canalis remained on her own side, drew near her horse, and remarked the beauty of the jeweled whip she carried in her hand.

"You will confess, Madame," replied Mademoiselle de la

Bastie, with a mischievous but tender glance at De la Brière, in which he could read an avowal, "that it is a very strange gift as coming from a future husband—"

"Indeed!" exclaimed Madame de Maufrigneuse. "I should regard it as a recognition of my rights, remembering Louis the Fourteenth."

There were tears in De la Brière's eyes; he dropped his bridle and was ready to fall; but another look from Modeste recalled him to himself, by warning him not to betray his happiness.

When, later, Modeste's mother, by a fortunate operation, regained her eyesight, and could at last see Ernest de la Brière, she murmured in Modeste's ear: "I should have chosen him!"

Toward the end of February all the documents relating to the acquisition of the estates were signed, and the transmission of the title and arms was made to De la Brière, who was authorized to call himself the Vicomte de la Brière. The wedding, which took place at the same time, was the beginning of a long life of happiness for both, and Modeste, who kept her promise of avoiding all the absurdities of pedantry, became the pride and delight of her husband, of her family, and of her circle of friends.

COUSIN BETTE (1846)

Cousin Bette, written by Balzac toward the end of his career, was published in *The Constitutionnel*, in instalments, between October 8 and December 3, 1846, and was produced to get money to pay off his indebtedness. The strenuous labor it involved, coming after the severe literary strain of the preceding years, is thought to have broken even Balzac's gigantic strength. *Cousin Bette* and *Cousin Pons* (which followed it in *The Constitutionnel*, after a few months) are comprised under the title: *The Poor Relations*. Balzac dedicated this to the Prince of Teano, Michele Angelo Cajetani, through admiration for his commentaries on Dante, which, Balzac declared, had made the *Divina Commedia* intelligible to him. Brunetière says that the Monarchy of July lives anew in *Cousin Bette*.

HECTOR HULOT D'ERVY, a young Frenchman in the commissary department of the army, chanced, through his official duties, to meet Adeline, daughter of a Lorraine peasant named Andrew Fischer. This girl of sixteen was so wondrously beautiful that Hulot married her as quickly as the law would permit. He was as strikingly handsome as his wife, and (in this her exact opposite) quite a gallant. For a long time this lovely woman commanded his entire devotion, while she, the peasant girl, raised to such social eminence and so adored by this superb man, held him as a god who could do no wrong.

Hulot rose to high dignities. He had a marshal's baton and was a great authority in the war-office. Now, after twelve years, Baron Hulot lived in a fine residence and was wealthy. His infidelities to Madame Hulot dated from the *finale* of the Empire, when, having no official occupation, he devoted himself to the ladies. His beautiful wife, although a saintly being, shut her eyes to all that her husband did outside his home.

Constantin Hulot, their son, had married the plain daughter of a rich retired perfumer, a *bourgeois* widower of fifty, named Celestin Crével. This conceited man, who imitated

Napoleon's poses, also imitated the Emperor in Napoleon's admiration for Adeline, but she had promptly repelled his amorous advances. A marriage had been arranged between Hortense Hulot, her daughter, and Counselor Lebas, which Crével blocked by intimating to the lawyer that Hulot could not supply the marriage portion of his daughter. Hulot had stolen away Crével's mistress, a beautiful young Jewess named Josepha, who was now a singer at the Opéra. This was an added reason why Crével desired to win Adeline. She summoned him to an interview to remonstrate with him, and asked him whether he would have ruined her daughter's marriage by his remark about the lack of money for her *dot*, if she, Adeline, had listened to his suit.

"I could not," he replied. "For then you would have had the sum, dearest Adeline—in my pocketbook!"

Adeline dismissed him, more troubled than ever. Hortense had reached twenty-three years of age and it was imperative that she should be married. Crével had told Adeline that the most likely husband for Hortense, in their straitened circumstances, would be a clever young man who would take Hortense penniless. The girl often talked about a lover with Lisbeth Fischer, her mother's cousin, who was always called "Cousin Bette."

This old maid of forty-five was a lean, brown, peasant woman, with thick eyebrows, strong limbs, and a bitter, jealous, vindictive disposition. Adeline's success had made her resentment intense, but she did not betray her feelings. When Adeline was settled in Paris after her marriage, she had invited Cousin Bette there to try to find a husband for her. But the offers Lisbeth got did not suit her. She had learned a trade and supported herself. As her rent in an obscure part of Paris was very cheap, and she had her dinners at the Hulots' and with other connections of the family, she had even managed to lay by a little money.

Hortense often teased Cousin Bette about having a lover. One day, after the mortifying ruin of Hortense's projected marriage, the old maid met the mockery of the other by stating that she had as lover a fair young Polish count, who was a sculptor, named Wenceslas Steinbock. Later, as proof, she

brought a little statuette of his making and showed it to Hortense and Adeline.

Hortense became so interested in this young man that she went to the art-shop where his work was exhibited. She admired a piece very much, but declared, rather sadly, that the price was beyond her purse. Steinbock chanced to be in the shop, and hearing this, introduced himself and said she could have it at her own price. Hortense was at once captivated by his beauty and charm, to which Cousin Bette had not done justice. She coyly asked him to bring it to her father's house, and added: "Do not mention the purchase to Mademoiselle Fischer. She is our cousin."

He called promptly, and in a short time the Hulots felt that here was a solution to the problem of Hortense's marriage. This poor nobleman, whose talent enabled him to support a wife, would ask no *dot*. Hulot promised to secure for him the commission to make a statue which the State was to erect to Marshal Montcornet. There was no scruple on anybody's part about Cousin Bette's claim upon this youth. She was old enough to be his mother, and had admitted that he was to her a sort of pleasant plaything. She learned of the engagement from an unlooked-for source.

Hector Hulot, in escorting Cousin Bette home one evening, saw a very charming, daintily dressed young woman enter the Rue du Doyenné. A glance that passed was enough to fire him, and since Josepha had cast him off he felt the need of just such a woman "friend." She was Madame Valérie Marneffe, the natural child of the deceased Marshal Montcornet, and her worthless husband was a clerk in the war office, of which Hulot was the head. It was very easy for the two to meet, and after a little Valérie had seemed to be swept away by her affection for Hulot. It was not long before he had established the Marneffes in a house in the Rue Varennes. In three years Valérie was costing him more than Josepha had.

Valérie, through Hulot, learned of the engagement of Wenceslas Steinbock and Hortense and naturally spoke of it to Cousin Bette. Valérie had known and admired the young Pole herself and thought Bette's interest in him was only philanthropic. The storm of rage and diabolical hatred toward

Madame Hulot to which Cousin Bette gave way when she learned that the Hulots had stolen the Pole from her was a revelation. But it led to the two women, each with decided designs on the Hulots, swearing a solid friendship for each other; and Cousin Bette went to live in the Marneffes' house in the Rue de Varennes. This helped Valérie to cloak her mercenary intrigues. There was a very "respectable" note about the household. A trust-fund of Marshal Montcornet for his daughter was invented to account for the Marneffes' changed style of living. Crével was carried away by Valérie because she was a lady; and he soon imagined that he had supplanted Hulot in the beauty's favor, although the opinion cost him several thousand francs. Valérie was simply playing off one against the other.

The situation was complicated by the unexpected arrival at Valérie's one evening, when Hulot and Crével were there, of a dashing Brazilian, Baron Montes Montejanos. He was the only man Valérie had ever really loved.

"Oh, my cousin!" cried Valérie, rising to greet the newcomer. The ardent South American drove Hulot and Crével distracted by his marked attentions to her. Finally Marneffe whispered in Valérie's ear, and she withdrew with him and the Brazilian. After a few moments she returned and declared that the sound of carriage-wheels which was heard indicated the new arrival's departure. Then, while Crével was playing cards with Marneffe, Valérie whispered to Hulot to go and to walk up and down outside until Crével came out. Marneffe retired, and Crével remonstrated sharply with Valérie. She treated him haughtily and soon had him at her feet again. Then she authorized him to tell Hulot, whom she said he would find in the street waiting for a signal to return, that she was tired of him and loved Crével. "He will not believe you. Take him to the Rue du Dauphin and give him every proof. Crush him," she cried.

Crével did as ordered, and Hulot was convinced of Valérie's infidelity to him. Both were discomfited at her trifling with them, but Valérie was now too engrossed with Baron Montes to care what they felt. She had one sincere regret. She had not yet avenged Cousin Bette on Hortense!

"Make your mind easy, my pretty little devil," said Lisbeth, kissing her forehead. "Hortense is in beggary. For a thousand francs you may have a thousand kisses from Wenceslas."

It was indeed true. Easy success had made Steinbock indolent and neglectful. He was severely criticized. Cousin Bette insinuated that Madame Marneffe would lend him money, but Hortense could not brook his appealing to her father's mistress to aid them. Then Lisbeth suggested to him that he could go without letting Hortense know. Steinbock went. Valérie had arranged everything—dinner, guests, and toilet, with a view to winning him. She loaned him ten thousand francs, refusing any interest, but suggesting that he should make a bronze statuette for her of Delilah cutting off Samson's hair.

"Such a group, and one of the ferocious Judith, epitomizes Woman," she cried gaily. "Virtue cuts off your head and Vice only cuts off your hair. Take care of your wigs, gentlemen!"

"Your vengeance is secure," she whispered to Lisbeth later. "Hortense will cry herself blind, and curse the day she robbed you of Wenceslas."

"I shall not think myself successful until I am Madame la Maréchale Hulot," replied Lisbeth. "They are beginning to wish this."

She had made Hulot's family feel that if Hector's elder brother—a glorious Marshal of Napoleon's and a superb old bachelor of flawless honor—would marry her, she would be able to help them when Hector's excesses had utterly stranded them. It was her dream of revenge to see them all, some day, eating out of her hand.

Hortense discovered Wenceslas's visits to Valérie and made such a scene that he did not go near Madame Marneffe for three weeks. This made Valérie hate Hortense as bitterly as Lisbeth did. At this juncture a serious incident arose, which she put to the greatest profit. One morning she announced to Marneffe that he was to become a father! Then she wrote a letter of reproach to Wenceslas, which she contrived to have Hortense receive. When that tender wife read this love-letter, which called him back with this appeal: "You missed fire with my father's statue, but in you the lover is greater than the artist, and you have had better luck with his daughter. You are a

father, my beloved Wenceslas!" she clutched her infant son and fled to her mother's protection.

Ten minutes after writing this letter Valérie had breathed into Hulot's ear that he was a father, and secretly conveyed the news of his paternity of the infant, a little later, to Crével. The real father was the Brazilian, Baron Montes.

Matters were becoming desperate for Hulot. Just at this time he received word from Johann Fischer, Adeline's uncle, whom he had sent to Algiers to thieve for him there, that the Government was investigating the expenditures in his department in Algiers, and that he could send him no more money. Marneffe was insolently pressing him for the promised chief-clerkship, and as it was impossible for Hulot to arrange that, he was shut out of the Marneffe household.

These trials and dangers actually made Hulot pass a fortnight in the bosom of his family, apparently a reclaimed man. But the active Cousin Bette brought him the key of the Rue du Dauphin, and he met Valérie there. The next morning Marneffe and officers of the law broke in upon the guilty pair and discovered Hulot's letter from Valérie declaring his paternity, which she had left on the table where they could not help seeing it.

The matter was hushed up through a high dignitary who had been Hulot's friend in Napoleon's days. But Marneffe got his clerkship. Lisbeth said she could not remain in Madame Marneffe's house, however, after such scandals became known! So she went to be Marshal Hulot's housekeeper, and ten days later the banns of marriage were published for them. Her revenge seemed at hand, for she would be Adeline's superior. The whole family continued to regard her as their rescuing angel.

Another letter from Johann Fischer demanded two hundred thousand francs to prevent the peculations that he and Hulot had committed from being found out. He declared he would not live to be tried as a disgraced man. Hulot fell almost lifeless at this blow. Adeline saw the letter, read it, and the dishonor which had been brought upon her honest peasant family was such a shock to her that for the rest of her life the poor woman never was free from a nervous trembling. In his

despair, Hulot groaned aloud that Crével was the only one who could help them.

A fearful, sublime possibility of rescue was suggested to the devoted wife by the mention of Crével and of the two hundred thousand francs needed! This pure woman, faithful wife, and honored mother, sent for Crével, prepared to sacrifice more than life for her uncle and her husband. The bitterest cup she ever had drained awaited her. Crével came, heard her, and said, striking a pose:

"When I offered you that money, I was only seeking revenge on Hulot for stealing Josepha from me. I have since had a finer revenge. For his mistress—a lady!—has been mine for three years, and when Marneffe dies I am going to marry her. Valérie only endured Hulot until her husband got his chief-clerkship, and now, as she says—for she is awfully witty—she 'restored you your Hector, virtuous in perpetuity.' "

The remorse and heart-breaking humility of Madame Hulot over such shame and failure actually moved Crével to promise to aid her. But on his way to get the securities he called on Valérie, who found out his purpose and jeered at him so that he abandoned it.

Johann Fischer killed himself after being arrested. When Marshal Hulot learned what shame and dishonor Hector had brought on them all, he took him home with himself, neither of them uttering a word on the way. Then the grand old soldier, ushering his infamous brother into the library, took a box containing a pair of pistols, the inscription on the lid reading: "Given by the Emperor Napoleon to General Hulot," and showing it to Hector, curtly remarked: "There is your remedy."

Lisbeth, peeping through the door, saw this significant scene, rushed off, and returned with Madame Hulot. Adeline, the picture of despair, fell into Hector's arms, looking with a wild air at the pistols and then at the stern old soldier.

"What do you say against your brother? What has he done to you?" she cried, in terror and anguish.

"He has disgraced us all!" replied the Marshal, with harsh vehemence. "He has robbed the Government! He has cast odium on my name. He has killed me. I can only live long enough to make restitution. As for his family, he has robbed

you of the bread I had saved for you by thirty years of privation and economy. He has killed your uncle, Johann Fischer, whom he inveigled into his thievery from his country, and who could not endure a stain upon his peasant honor.

"To crown all, God gave him you, an angel among women, for a wife. He has deceived you, neglected you, to waste himself and the fortune due to his family upon courtesans, his Cadines, Josephas, and Marneffes, those grasping hussies! And that is the brother I treated as a son and as my pride.

"Go, wretched man!" he concluded, turning to Hector. "If you can accept the life of degradation you have made for yourself, leave my house! I have not the heart to curse you, but never let me see you again. I forbid his attending my funeral, or following me to my grave. Take him away, for I hear a voice that commands me to load my pistols and blow out the brains of this monster, this swine! In that way, I would save you all, and even save him from himself."

He had sprung up with such a terrifying gesture that Adeline seized her husband's arm, and crying, "Hector—come!" dragged him away, and, her heart having only the deepest pity for him, led the prostrated man home.

Marshal Hulot, although through influence the scandal had been hushed up, insisted on paying into the State treasury his entire fortune as restitution for the sums of which his brother had robbed it. Lisbeth had assented to this, when the Marshal asked her consent. In three days the noble old soldier was dead, despite Lisbeth's careful nursing. His death was a thunderbolt that destroyed all that she had built up. The Marshal had died of the blows dealt at the family by herself and her good friend, Valérie. Her former vindictiveness was trebled, as she returned, crying with rage, to Madame Marneffe.

Poor Adeline had felt that now she would have her shattered and humiliated husband to herself. She dreamed that she would rehabilitate him, lead him back to family life, and reconcile him with himself. Soon after his brother's funeral, he deserted her and rushed to his former mistress, Josepha, imploring her assistance. The excess of his extravagance, and the recklessness with which he had plunged into such depths for the Marneffe woman, actually appealed to that singular

creature's heart. She set him up as proprietor of an embroidery shop, supplied him with a poor, innocent girl of sixteen, who was wonderfully beautiful, as a partner in the firm, and guaranteed him an income.

After a time, Victorin Hulot had been made into a man by the family ruin his father had precipitated, and was building the Hulot fortune up again. Adeline had been appointed the disburser of their charities by several wealthy and devout ladies of rank. Cousin Bette brought to this peaceful household, one morning, the news that Valérie was to marry Crével, and kindly recounted the enormous sums he had already expended upon the wretched woman. Lisbeth had counseled Valérie, who wished to throw over everybody and marry Baron Montes, to marry Crével, who would not last more than ten years, and then, after his death, to take Montejanos. In the mean time Valérie was quite interested in Wenceslas, which gratified Cousin Bette and gave herself the satisfaction of torturing Hortense.

Adeline had told the family that she had learned Hulot was in Paris. The pale, broken wife longed to have her wretched husband share the present peace of the family home. Cousin Bette had said, indignantly: "I would wager that he begs money of his former mistresses!"

This remark haunted Adeline, and, without a word to anyone, she went to Josepha, thinking she might find out something about her husband's whereabouts. That singular woman, who in her fashion had been kind to Hulot, was deeply touched by the pathetic figure and exquisite wifely devotion of Adeline, who was so eager to find her husband, now seventy-four years old, who had deserted her two and a half years before. She promised her every aid she could give. "Wait a few days and you shall see him, or I renounce the God of my fathers—and that from a Jewess, you know, is a promise of success."

Baron Montes Montejanos frequented the gay society of Paris, but was not known to have any mistress. Carabine, a brilliant *demi-mondaine,* gave a dinner at the *Rocher de Cancale* to a number of her friends, including the wealthy Brazilian. They hoped to solve this mystery. A remark of Josepha, lauding Hulot as a lover who had ruined himself for

his mistress, elicited in rapid succession the facts that he had done this for Madame Marneffe, who was to marry Crével, and who was really in love with Steinbock.

Montes turned pale, and violently vituperated these calumniators. "If you wished to find out my secret," he concluded, with a flaming glance around the table, "at least, cease to vilify the woman I love."

"I can prove it in an hour," whispered Carabine in his ear, when they had left the restaurant. As Montes demanded absolute proof, she conducted him to an apartment near the Opéra, where they surprised Valérie and Steinbock. He was lacing her stays for her. Montes had sworn to Carabine that if he found that Valérie was deceiving him he would kill her in his own way. Now, as he departed from this scene he muttered: "I shall be the instrument of Divine wrath!"

One morning, some time after this, Dr. Bianchon, who had called at Victorin's to see how Adeline was, spoke of a wonderful case to which he had been called recently: that of a man and his wife, both suffering from a hideous but almost unknown disease. "The disease is a rapid blood-poisoning, peculiar to negroes and the American tribes," he said. "It is not curable in Europe. The woman, once very pretty, is now a mass of putrefaction, and looks like a leper. The stench in the room is so intolerable that no servant will stay in it. They are a Monsieur and Madame Crével."

Cousin Bette went to see her friend at once.

"If I had not been ill myself I would have come to nurse you," she said.

"Poor Lisbeth, you, at least, love me still, I see!" said Valérie. "I have only a day or two left to think, for I cannot say to live. Oh, if I might only win mercy! I would gladly undo all the mischief I have done."

"Oh!" cried Lisbeth, "if you can talk like that, you are indeed a dead woman."

"Lisbeth, give up all notions of revenge. Be kind to that family, to whom I have left by will everything I can dispose of. Go, child, I beseech you, and leave me. I have only time to make my peace with God!"

"She is wandering in her wits," said Lisbeth to herself, as

she left the room. She returned, however, with Bianchon, who had come to tell Valérie that they meant to apply a powerful remedy to her, which held much promise.

"If you save my life," she asked, "shall I be as good-looking as ever?"

"*Possibly*," said the physician, slowly.

"I know your 'possibly,'" said Valérie. "I shall look like a woman who has fallen into the fire! No! Leave me to the Church. I can please no one now but God. I will try to be reconciled with Him. It will be my last flirtation! Yes, I must try to come around God!"

"That is my poor Valérie's last jest. That is all herself!" said Lisbeth, in tears.

By the end of the week Madame Crével was dead, and two days later Crével expired, impenitent. The order of their deaths made him his wife's heir, so that Célestine Hulot, his daughter, recovered the money he had lavished on his mercenary mistress.

Adeline's charitable work brought her one day to an old man, slouchily dressed in a gray flannel shirt and trousers, who was living with a girl of the slums. It was her once handsome Hector, who was perfectly willing to be taken back to his family. Cousin Bette, who was dying of consumption, had her last days embittered by the returned prodigal's almost veneration for his faithful wife. She kept her hatred a secret from them to the end, and had the satisfaction of seeing them all stand around her death-bed, mourning her as the angel of the family.

For nearly three years Baron Hulot continued to be a comfort to Adeline, whose health greatly improved. Then she discovered the old man trying to win a raw, buxom kitchen-wench by promising to make her a baroness when his wife should die! The shock killed her. On her death-bed, she whispered to him: "My dear, I have nothing left to give you except my life. In a minute or two you will be free, and can make another Baroness Hulot."

On the brink of eternity this angel gave utterance to the only reproach she had ever spoken in her life. Within a year the Baron, who had left Paris three days after Adeline's death, wedded Agathe Piquetard, the kitchen-maid.

COUSIN PONS (1847)

In planning the two novels comprised under the title *The Poor Relations*, Balzac's intention was to make *Cousin Pons* the more important work. But *Cousin Bette*, with its devilishly vindictive heroine, got such possession of him as to become the longer and more impressive story. Balzac explicitly declares, in *Cousin Pons*, that the two taken conjunctively prove that "character is the chief of all social forces." He says also that the chief object of interest, on the heroine, so to speak, in *Cousin Pons*, "as amateurs, connoisseurs, and collectors will at once perceive, is the Pons Collection."

BOUT three o'clock, one October afternoon in 1844, a singular-looking man, more than sixty years old, was wending his way along the Boulevard des Italiens, in Paris, his nose in the air and his lips pursed up, as if he had made a good bargain. His gaunt figure was clothed with such a regard for the fashions of 1806 that he seemed a caricature of the Imperial Era. He wore black trousers and three waistcoats, the outside one black, the next white, and the inside one red; a voluminous white muslin cravat, in which his chin was engulfed; and, as a last distinctive garment, a hazel-colored spencer, which surmounted a greenish coat with white metal buttons.

His face corrected the tendency to laugh occasioned by his costume, for it was one from which no woman could have heard a word of love issue without a burst of merriment, or experiencing a recoil of loathing. The large countenance, under a leprous-looking old silk hat, resembled a Roman mask dug out of the earth. It appeared to have no bones and was deeply pitted, and had a huge Don Quixote nose as its most prominent feature, while sad, gray eyes peered forth beneath two red lines which did duty as eyebrows. His thin legs were emphasized by the voluminous trousers, and his thick, sensual lips, when they parted, showed two rows of pearly teeth which would have done credit to a shark. This uncouth visage was illumined by a smile. The man held some object carefully under the

two left skirts of his coats, as if to screen it or protect it from impact.

This grotesque old fellow was Monsieur Sylvain Pons, a composer who had been a Grand Prix winner of the *Académie de Rome*, and now, in the autumn of his life, was conductor of an orchestra in a Boulevard theater, and, thanks to his ugliness, music-teacher in several young ladies' boarding-schools. His only sources of revenue were derived from these occupations.

In Rome he had acquired a taste for antiquities and beautiful works of art, with the result that he returned to Paris with a collection of pictures, statuettes, carvings in ivory and wood, enamels, china, and the like, which had absorbed the greater part of his patrimony. He had continued to collect, and now had nearly two thousand works of art. They were his delight, and he would have thought it a crime to sell this Pons Collection.

This passionate collector, whose delicacy and high moral nature were sustained by the beauty of art, was the slave of that one of the seven deadly sins which God will surely punish with less severity than He will any of the others. Pons was a gourmand. His slender means admitted only a diet far from what his palate craved, so he sought its worthier gratification by dining out whenever he could. Naturally, the poor fellow's value as a dinner-guest waned as his years augmented; and now that he had fallen into the triple indigence of old age, poverty, and intensified ugliness of features, he was restricted to his family circle for the gratification of his gastronomic passion. He had been led to give far too extensive an application to the limits of that circle.

In 1835, Pons had found in friendship some compensation for his denial of conquests with the fair sex. But for the existence of La Fontaine's divine fable, this history would have been entitled *The Two Friends*. His *alter ego* was a German pianist named Schmucke. Never perhaps had two such congenial spirits met upon the wide ocean of Humanity. Schmucke was as absent-minded as Pons was observant. Pons secured a place for this friend at the theater where he conducted the orchestra. Schmucke played the piano and had charge of the scores. They lived in a modest apartment in the quiet Rue de Normandie in the Marais, sharing expenses. They soon ac-

quired the nickname of "the pair of nut-crackers" among the denizens of the quarter. Winter and summer, they rose at seven, and after breakfast went to give their music-lessons. The evening found them united again at the theater. This twin existence was ruffled only by Pons's passion for dining out. "If it would only make him vatter!" Schmucke would say to himself. A divine serenity mitigated the German's fearful ugliness.

Among the "relatives" to whom Pons was restricted as a dinner-guest at the period in which we have seen him walking the Boulevard des Italiens, there was actually only one who merited the title, and he was only a cousin once removed: Camusot de Marville, president of one of the divisions of the Court Royal of Paris. This gentleman's deceased mother had been first cousin to Pons. Their parents had been members of the rich firm of Pons Brothers, perfumers. Madame Camusot de Marville, the second wife of this gentleman, never had given a warm reception to "Cousin" Pons. She was a Cardot, so Cousin Pons considered the Cardot tribe his relatives, as well as the Chiffrevilles, into which family her brother had married, and through these, the Popinots. Such was the *bourgeois* firmament which Pons styled his family! and in which, by many a painful effort, he had retained the privilege of eating good dinners. The daughter of Camusot de Marville, Cécile, a rude, red-haired young woman of twenty-three, whom they were eager to marry off, was as disaffected toward Cousin Pons as her virulent mamma. It was to their house that the old gentleman with his concealed treasure was hastening. Even the servants had caught the prevalent note toward the "poor relation," and had often made the sensitive Pons wince by their audible comments.

When Pons arrived this evening, the mother and daughter had planned a *coup* which would rout the "cousin." They pretended they had an engagement but told him he could stay and dine alone. And Pons had brought to this insolent woman an exquisite, delicately carved fan, painted by Watteau, and once a possession of Madame de Pompadour.

"It is high time," said Cousin Pons, "that what has been in the service of Vice should be placed in the hands of Virtue."

The lady, who was quite ignorant of even the name "Watteau," accepted the fan, but was so insolent later that, stung to the quick, Pons took his dismissal (for he felt it was that), and burning with humiliated pride, rushed home, his wounded dignity driving him along like a straw before the wind. The contemptuous epithet of "sponger," which he had heard muttered by one of the lackeys of the Camusots, scorched him with humiliation, and the gentle soul could hardly restrain his tears. He dashed past Madame Cibot, the doorkeeper of the house where he had lodged for twenty-six years, with no sort of recognition. He poured his pitiful tale into Schmucke's wholly sympathetic ear, and said he would dine with him. The loyal German, enraptured, cried out: "Tine here effery day! We will pric-à-prack together, and the teffil will neffer put his tail into our home."

To Schmucke's perfect joy, they did have their dinners together for four months. But Pons missed the refinement, the choice viands, the exquisite wines, and the sophisticated conversation of those tables of his "relations." Moreover, paying for his dinners diminished by just so much his expenditure for *objets d'art*. The loss of two such coveted pleasures made the old gentleman melancholy, and even his gauntness was notably augmented.

"I would giff almost annyting to zave him," said the faithful Schmucke. "He finds life vearyzome."

Fate was to restore Pons to his former status. Count Popinot, meeting him one day, wrung from him the reason for his disappearance, and promptly acquainted Camusot with this grievance. Madame Camusot, who was the meanest of snobs, immediately threw the blame upon the impudent remarks of the servants. Her husband required them, by a threat of dismissal otherwise, to go to Pons and apologize, which they did. Thus Pons found himself restored to the delights of fine dinners, and the moribund old man became the self-contented parasite once more. Schmucke became almost ill over the change, but buried his sorrow in his heart.

Just at this time, through his German friend, Pons had become acquainted with a wealthy bachelor of forty, Fritz Brunner, and conceived the idea that he might in him supply

Cécile Camusot with a husband. Plans were made to bring this about, which seemed quite promising at first. But later the astute German got the measure of the young woman's character so well that he absolutely withdrew. Poor Pons was made the scapegoat of this "affront." Madame Camusot affected to see in the negotiations a scheme of Pons to heap contumely on them. It was an infernal device which would save the honor of the family.

"I hope, Monsieur Pons, that for the future you will spare us the pain of seeing you in a house into which you have endeavored to introduce shame and dishonor," she said venomously. "Neither your master nor myself will ever be at home to this gentleman," she continued, speaking to the servants and pointing at Pons, "should he call." All the connections accepted this story, and poor Cousin Pons became a pariah whom they "cut" absolutely.

The innocent man was ill for a month from the hideous injustice of this calumny, and Schmucke was heart-broken at his dejection. For the first time in his lamblike existence, he was roused to fierce indignation, and called these maligners "beasts."

The walk on which Pons had been scornfully "cut" by the two most important members of his circle of "relations" was the last he ever took. He walked wearily and silently home, leaning on the arm of Schmucke, took to his bed, and was found by the district doctor, Poulain, to be dangerously ill with inflammation of the liver. Most important consequences flowed from this doctor's visit. Dr. Poulain told Madame Cibot that, as her lodger was too poor to engage a nurse, she would have to care for him, and that, as he would be extremely irritable, nothing must be done to fret him, as it might cost Pons his life.

Remonencqs, a lean dealer in curiosities, with a small shop in the neighborhood, had heard Brunner, after a visit to Pons, remark, on leaving, that his collection was worth thousands of francs. He repeated this to Dr. Poulain and Madame Cibot, with the result of arousing a fierce cupidity in both. The doorkeeper already saw herself "well remembered" in Pons's will! It practically turned her from a negative probity to absolute depravity through the cupidity aroused in her.

She began at once an aggressive domination of the invalid, who was necessarily left alone in her charge much of the time. She found out that Pons meant to leave all to Schmucke, to whose "consideration" he would recommend her. For both these childlike beings regarded the terrible harpy as a kind but rough creature, genuinely interested in them.

Dr. Poulain recommended her to consult a lawyer friend of his, named Fraisier, a cunning, sordid wretch, adding that she had better feather her own nest as best she could and then accept what Fraisier and himself would do for her for helping their game. The doorkeeper accordingly misrepresented the expense and exertion to which the care of the two old gentlemen had subjected her, especially since Pons's illness, and thereby forced Schmucke into consenting to the sale of some of the pictures in order to indemnify her. Schmucke was as trustful and as ignorant of business as a little child, but when she urged him to this step he at first replied with simplicity: "I gannot dizpose of things which do not belong to me." Whereupon Madame Cibot procured a summons, and the official document so impressed the poor German that he said, with tears in his eyes: "Sell de bigdures!"

Elie Magus, one of the greatest collectors in Europe, and Remonencqs got eight of the best paintings, and the cunning Madame Cibot secured sixty-eight thousand francs for having brought about the transaction. Remonencqs, who had long coveted a shop for curios on the Boulevard, became convinced that this shrewd and wealthy woman would be a great help in conducting it, if he could only marry her, which seemed to him very feasible, were it not for the lady's husband, a tailor. To a mind like his, it was a slight step to facilitate her becoming a widow, and he managed to "doctor" the invalid husband's barley-water with a copper rundle greatly oxidized! There was no reason for suspecting anybody of an interest in this old fellow's demise!

Fraisier had taken care to frighten Madame Cibot when she consulted him, by saying that Madame Camusot, who was greatly interested in her husband's inheriting from Pons (which he would do if the old collector failed to make a will), was a terrible force to rouse against oneself. He had instantly con-

ceived a scheme by which he could secure the appointment of justice of the peace for himself, and that of head of a Paris hospital for his friend, Dr. Poulain, should it "happen" that Pons died intestate! He went to Madame Camusot, and, by insinuations, which veiled a covert agreement, set forth that if Dr. Poulain should insist on the removal of Madame Cibot's administrations (which he might do if he considered their effect on the irritable invalid as *too* detrimental), that gentleman might recover!

Fraisier, to be able to state to Madame Camusot de Marville the value of the Pons Collection, had seen the necessity of having it appraised. He had therefore induced Madame Cibot to arrange that he, Elie Magus, and Remonencqs should do this at a time when Schmucke was absent and when Pons was asleep, his slumber having been induced by Madame Cibot's meddling with his medicine. Despite this, Pons awoke, and although the two men had promptly fled at his cry of "Thieves!" when he saw them, he recognized Elie Magus! His suspicions were more than confirmed when, later, he dragged himself to his gallery and saw that certain inferior canvases from Schmucke's room had been substituted for several of the most precious of his paintings! When he learned of the specious trickery by which the simple German, whose one dominant aspiration was to have Pons restored to health, had been induced to sell these, he fell into deep pondering. The result was to turn the simple Pons into a being of extraordinary astuteness. His one aim now was to convince Schmucke of the devilish duplicity of the Cibot woman, in whom they both had been hideously deceived, and then to secure his property as inalienably as possible to his artless but devoted friend. He therefore had him summon a notary, and drew up a will which was duly witnessed, and which bequeathed his entire collection to the State if a certain annuity would be paid to Schmucke for life. He told Schmucke to keep close watch and see whether Madame Cibot would not meddle with this will, feeling that this would open even his trusting soul to conviction of her vileness. Then he sent for Mademoiselle Héloïse Brisetout, *danseuse* at his theater, and had her send him a reliable and learned notary who would draw up

an unassailable will by which everything would become Schmucke's.

When Pons told him this scheme, the honest fellow clasped the hands of his friend, and breathed a fervent prayer to himself. Pons asked him what he was doing.

"I was braying to God to take us to Himself togedder," replied Schmucke simply, when his prayer was ended.

With great difficulty, for he was suffering the acutest pain, Pons managed to stoop low and imprint a kiss on Schmucke's forehead. In that kiss, Pons poured forth his whole soul in a blessing upon that being, who in heart and mind resembled the Lamb that reposes at the feet of God.

The scheme worked perfectly. Madame Cibot filched the will from the compartment in the desk in which it had been locked up, and took it down-stairs to show it to Fraisier. He recognized how fatal this will was to Madame Camusot's interests, and consequently to his own hopes, since the agreement had been that the favors she would secure for him were contingent on her inheriting. He promptly substituted a blank paper in the envelope, without letting Madame Cibot see him do it, then sealed it and restored it to her. "That cuts you off," he said. "But there is a fire in the grate! And if Pons dies intestate I will promise you a hundred thousand francs."

Madame Cibot returned to the room and was about to throw the envelope in the fire when Pons and Schmucke gripped her by the shoulders. She screamed and went into convulsions. Then, rallying, she declared vehemently that her act was due only to a woman's curiosity. Schmucke reviled her as a monster and drove her from the room. When she returned with this tale to Fraisier, he declared that she was liable to prosecution for stealing a will! He then pacified the terror-stricken woman by promising to aid her if she would be submissive to his wishes.

The next morning Madame Cibot's husband, thanks to Remonencqs's continued interest in his health, sent for the priest and received the last sacraments. In the confusion, Pons's lawyer got to his apartment, and the dying collector made his last will as he had planned, constituting his devoted

Schmucke his universal legatee. After which, utterly prostrated by the excitement of the past twenty-four hours and the reaction, he called for a priest himself and prepared for death.

When, some hours later, Madame Cibot sent a messenger to see what was going on, the woman was not permitted to enter the room. Fraisier, who was waiting below, conceived the idea of introducing his own housekeeper into the apartment as a watch-dog, and managed to do this by having Madame Cantinet, the wife of the beadle of St. Francis's Church, take her as an assistant, when, at the abbé's suggestion, that good woman had been summoned to take Madame Cibot's place as attendant on Pons and Schmucke. Just as they entered the room poor Cousin Pons died, so quietly that it was only when Madame Sauvage, Fraisier's housekeeper, touched his hands that they learned he had passed away. Schmucke, agonized at this death of his one friend—and it was the first death he had ever seen—could only groan to any and every suggestion: "Do what you bleaze!" This truest of friends was to go through a veritable martyrdom. He watched the women and their proceedings as an idiot might have. His eyes were fixed on the dead face of his late companion, whose contour was purified by the repose of death into something fascinating, and Schmucke not only was absolutely indifferent to everything terrestrial, but felt nothing except a longing to die and join his friend. He would eat nothing, and whenever he was left alone with the body of Pons, he held it clasped in a close embrace.

A more facile victim to the plundering of everybody who had anything to gain could not be imagined, and he was pursued by Fraisier and that wretched lawyer's tools. Touts for every sort of thing connected with the disposition of a corpse swarmed about him and plucked him. In his desperation at these incessant appeals, which dragged him from the thought of his dead friend, he gladly appointed Tabareau, an accomplice of Fraisier, his proxy in all matters relating to the succession.

"I would giff all dat I bozzezz to be left alone," he sighed. Dame Sauvage, at the close of day, found him stretched across the foot of the bed where Pons lay, in the sleep of utter exhaustion. She lifted him like an infant to his own couch, and when he awoke Pons was in his coffin, beneath the carriage gateway.

Pons had one mourner besides Schmucke—a poor supernumerary at the theater, named Topinard, to whom he had given five francs every month. As Pons's body was lowered into the grave, Schmucke swooned with emotion. When he had been revived, Topinard assisted him back to the house. As the lease of the apartment was in Pons's name only, Fraisier evicted the unfortunate German, who secured a garret room in Topinard's humble lodging. "All I want is some nook to die in," he said. As he had not money to pay for anything after the drain of Pons's illness, he went to Gandissard, the proprietor of the theater, to get a month's salary. Gandissard, a friend of Popinot, and acquainted with the situation, advised the simple German to compromise with the legal heirs, who would give him a sum down and an annuity for life.

Schmucke assented, and authorized him to act. He had only two demands.

"Dobinard was Bons's vrend. He is de only berzon who followed him to de zemetery. I want tree touzand francs for him, and tree touzand francs for his nice little girl with light hair, like a little German girl."

These conditions were promptly granted. Fraisier had induced Madame Camusot de Marville to summon Schmucke and contest the will, on the ground of his undue influence over Pons, which she did. Gandissard arrived after him and told of his arrangement with Schmucke. It was agreed that the deed should be signed the next day. By signing this deed, with a preamble in which the grounds for contesting the will were stated, the poor German would admit the justice of Fraisier's fearful imputations. As Schmucke was about to sign, Topinard arrived with the summons which had been sent to Schmucke at his lodgings, to warn the old German against such injustice. Gandissard went out to meet him, and in that interval Schmucke signed the fatal document. He came forth smiling with the money in his hand. "Dis is for de little German girl and you," he said.

"Oh, dear Monsieur Schmucke, you have been enriching a pack of monsters! Read that, and you will see that your duty was to punish this wickedness by defending the action."

Schmucke read the paper. It was a mortal blow. He fell

exhausted into Topinard's arms. He never recovered his reason through the ten days he survived. He was nursed by Madame Topinard and was buried obscurely by Topinard, who was the only person to follow this child of Germany to his last resting-place.

Every one of the evil hounders to death of the two friends derived great advantages from their villainy. Cousin Pons's Collection went to adorn Popinot's house, as Cécile, who was now his daughter-in-law, had inherited it. One day, a Russian nobleman, who was a collector, asked her who had amassed these exquisite treasures of art.

"A cousin who was very fond of me," replied the Viscountess.

"Monsieur Pons was a charming man," interjected Madame Camusot de Marville, in her dulcet falsetto voice. "This Watteau fan, once Madame de Pompadour's, he placed in my hands one morning with a charming little phrase, which I must not repeat! Such talent and originality, and such kindness of heart! He used to dine with us three or four times every week, because we appreciated him so thoroughly."

"And the phrase that went with the gift of the fan?" asked the nobleman.

"The little phrase is worthy of the fan," said the Viscountess (whose "little phrase" was a stereotyped expression). "He said to my mother that it was high time that what had been in the hands of Vice should be placed in the hands of Virtue."

The nobleman looked at Madame Camusot de Marville with an air of doubt that was extremely flattering to so lean a lady!

Madame Remonencq is still in her magnificent shop on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, once more a widow, through a singular chance. As her husband had had the marriage contract drawn up so that all the property should go to the survivor, he placed a liqueur glass of vitriol within his wife's reach, expecting that she would make a mistake. But as she, with the best intentions in the world, changed its position, it was Remonencq who swallowed it! Such a fitting end for the miscreant is an argument in favor of the existence of Providence.

THE MEMBER FOR ARCIS (1854)

Le Député d'Arcis is classed under the *Scènes de la Vie Politique* in the *Comédie Humaine*. It is divided into three sections: I: *L'Election;* II: *Lettres Edifiantes;* III: *Le Comte de Sallenauve*. The only part that appeared in Balzac's life was *The Election*, which was published in *L'Union Monarchique* in 1847. The work was completed by Charles Rabou, who was chosen by Balzac to finish it and the second and third chapters first appeared in the *Constitutionnel* in 1853. Rastignac and Jacques Collins, who were introduced in *Père Goriot*, appear in *The Member for Arcis*. The latter, who had assumed the names of Vautrin, Trompe-la-Mort (in *Père Goriot*), and Herrera (in *Lost Illusions*), now appears in three characters here: Monsieur de Saint-Estève, the Marquis de Sallenauve, and Monsieur le Comte Halphertius. Dorlange is a grandson of Danton, which explains the likeness that everyone noticed.

N April, 1839, about ten in the morning, the drawing-room of Madame Marion, widow of a revenue collector in the Department of the Aube, presented a strange appearance. The carpet and all the furniture had been removed, an old man-servant attached to Colonel Giguet, Madame Marion's brother, had just finished sweeping, and the housemaid and cook were bringing in chairs and arranging them according to Madame Marion's directions. The latter placed three arm-chairs behind the tea-table, which she covered with a green cloth, on which she placed a bell.

"We can seat seventy persons," she said to Colonel Giguet, who now entered.

"God send us seventy friends," exclaimed the Colonel. He then inquired for his son, Simon.

"He is dressing," she replied; "he is very nervous."

"My word! Yes! I have often stood the fire of a battery and my soul never quaked—my body I say nothing about; but if I had to stand up here," said the old soldier, placing himself behind the table, "opposite the forty good people who will sit there open-mouthed, their eyes fixed on mine, expect-

ing a set speech in sounding periods—my shirt would be soaking before I could find a word."

"And yet, my dear father, you must make that effort in my behalf," said Simon Giguet, entering, "for if there is a man in the department whose word is powerful, it is certainly you. My whole life is at stake, my prospects, my happiness."

Colonel Giguet was one of the most respected officers in the *Grande Armée*, and fanatically devoted to Napoleon. The Comte de Gondreville prevented his banishment in 1815 and got for him a pension and the rank of colonel. He lived with Madame Marion, who, in 1814, settled in Arcis, her native town, and bought a handsome residence in the Grande Place. Her drawing-room for the last four-and-twenty years had been open to the prominent members of the Liberal circle at Arcis. Colonel Giguet, a Liberal, after being a Bonapartist, became, under the Restoration, president of the town council of Arcis, which included Grévin the notary, Grévin's brother-in-law, Varlet *fils*, the chief physician in the town, and Grévin's son-in-law, Beauvisage. For the past nine years, since his political party had come to the top, the Colonel had lived almost out of the world, devoting himself to the culture of roses, and he had the stained hands of a true gardener.

"If our dear boy is not elected," said Madame Marion, "he will not win Mademoiselle Beauvisage; for what he looks for in the event of his success is marrying Cécile."

Cécile Beauvisage was the richest heiress in the Department of the Aube and had already refused many suitors.

The district of Arcis-sur-Aube believed itself free to elect a deputy. From 1816 till 1836 it had always returned one of the most ponderous orators of the Left, one of those seventeen whom the Liberal party loved to designate as *great citizens*—no less a man, in short, than François Keller, of the firm of Keller Brothers, son-in-law to the Comte de Gondreville.

Gondreville, one of the finest estates in France, was not far from Arcis. The banker, lately created count and peer of France, hoped that his son would succeed him as deputy. Charles Keller, already a major with a staff appointment, and now a viscount, as one of the Prince Royal's favorites, was attached to the party of the Citizen King. A splendid future

seemed to lie before this young man, possessed of immense wealth, courage, and devotion to the new dynasty, who was, moreover, grandson of the Comte de Gondreville and nephew of the Maréchale de Carigliano.

As soon as Grévin, the notary, declared that he would support Charles Keller, Arcis conceived a strong feeling against him and supported Simon Giguet. Philéas Beauvisage, the Mayor, on bad terms with his father-in-law, was naturally of this party. Madame Marion, queen of Arcis society, had, with her friends, organized a meeting of "Independent Electors" in favor of her nephew, Simon Giguet; and she had turned the whole house topsy-turvy for the reception of the friends on whose independence she relied.

Simon Giguet, the home-made candidate of a little town that was jealously eager to return one of its sons, had, as has been seen, at once taken advantage of this stir to represent the wants and interests of Southwestern Champagne. At the same time, the position and fortune of the Giguet family were due to the Comte de Gondreville. Simon, although a lawyer, was the butt of many pleasantries. He was so ready to talk that he had laid himself open to ridicule. Now, when the door-bell announced the advent of the electors, he began to feel nervous.

The first to come were Philéas Beauvisage and the notary, Achille Pigoult, who was sent by Madame Beauvisage to keep an eye on Beauvisage. He was really a spy from the Gondreville faction; and Simon immediately scented an enemy when he saw him. By twelve o'clock fifty men were seated in the chairs that had been arranged by Madame Marion, who took a seat in the garden where she could overhear everything.

At three o'clock, Simon Giguet was still explaining the meaning of progress. Achille Pigoult had persuaded the electors to listen and many of them were asleep. Meanwhile the other party was informed of the sudden death of Charles Keller. An opposition candidate to Simon Giguet had now to be found.

Old Grévin had great ambitions for the third generation. He hoped by means of his gold to start Cécile on the high road to greatness. He told Madame Beauvisage one day when she

called and found him taking his coffee under the blossoming lilacs that he had bought the Hôtel Beauseant in Paris for a wedding-gift for Cécile and he had planned a brilliant future for his daughter and granddaughter. Madame Beauvisage must, however, refuse Simon Giguet's attentions. He also said: "You and Cécile would be miserable with an old family of the Faubourg Saint-Germain; they would make you feel your humble birth in a thousand little ways. What we must look out for is one of Napoleon's dukes who is in want of money; then we can get a fine title for Cécile, and we will tie up her fortune."

Madame Marion held her usual salon that evening; and Madame Beauvisage told her daughter that, as she was destined to shine in Paris, she must be very reserved with the young men of Arcis, especially Simon Giguet.

"Be quite easy," was her reply; "I will begin at once to adore the Unknown."

The Unknown was the subject of conversation in every family of Arcis. Three days before Simon's meeting, a Stranger in a neat tilbury, drawn by a fine horse and followed by a small lackey, arrived in Arcis and took rooms at the *Mulet*. The coach brought three unlabeled trunks from Paris. He gave no name and his mysterious behavior set all the tongues of Arcis wagging. The Stranger was the chief subject of conversation at Madame Marion's. Madame Mollot, wife of the clerk of assize, had even peered from her house through her opera-glasses, and was certain that he wore a wig! Antonin Goulard left Madame Marion's to make inquiries, and, returning, informed the gossips that the Stranger was a count who had just returned from Gondreville. Cécile's interest in the Stranger aroused Simon's jealousy. During the evening Madame Beauvisage informed Madame Marion of Cécile's prospects and said: "If you have any proposals to make, go and see my father."

The next day, Simon, certain of his election, remarked to the sous-préfet: "But I have no opponent." "So you think," said Antonin Goulard. "But one will turn up; there is no doubt of that."

Goulard made use of his official position to intrude upon

the Stranger, who received him with *sangfroid* and handed him the following letter from the préfet of the department:

"MONSIEUR LE SOUS-PRÉFET:—Be good enough to take steps with the bearer as to the election in Arcis, and conform to his requirements in every particular. I request you to be absolutely secret, and to treat him with the respect due to his rank."

The Stranger asked himself to dine with Goulard and requested that Goulard should invite the Beauvisages. He also handed Goulard two other letters, saying: "Make out a list of all the votes at the disposal of the Government. Above all, we must not appear to have any understanding. I am merely a speculator, and do not care a fig about the election."

Comte Maxime de Trailles, prince of rakes and dandies, having run through his fortune at the age of forty-eight, determined to marry; and, as he could not find a wife in the highest Parisian circles, nor, indeed, in the middle class, asked his friend, Rastignac, a peer of France and possessed of great political influence, to help him conclude a rich marriage and launch him into a diplomatic career.

Rastignac told him of the helplessness of the present ministry, and added: "If you could distinguish yourself in the thick of the electoral fray that is beginning; if you become a voter—a member—faithful to the reigning dynasty, your wishes shall be attended to. . . . As to your marriage, my dear fellow, that can only be arranged in the country. In Paris you are too well known. The thing to do is to find a millionaire, a parvenu, with a daughter and the ambition to swagger at the Tuileries."

A few weeks later Rastignac told him that Charles Keller had been killed in Africa and that as he was "our candidate for the borough and district of Arcis," his death had left a gap. Armed with letters to Gondreville and the local officials and with a loan from Rastignac's father-in-law, the Baron de Nucingen, Maxime de Trailles was, within an hour, on the road to Arcis.

Supplied with information by the landlady of the *Mulet* and Antonin Goulard, Maxime de Trailles lost no time in arranging the plan of his electoral campaign. This shrewd

agent for his own private politics at once set up Philéas Beauvisage as the candidate in opposition to Simon Giguet; and, notwithstanding that the man was a cipher, he had strong chances. Maxime, of course, intended to gain old Grévin's consent to his marriage with the handsome Cécile.

Beauvisage's nomination caught fire, and just as Maxime had written to Rastignac regarding the success of his schemes, another candidate appeared on the scene.

A bundle of "edifying letters" threw light on this new candidate and his chances for election. A Monsieur Dorlange, a sculptor, having been asked to make a monument for the wife of an old friend of his, M. Marie-Gaston, refused on the plea that he was being urged to come forward as a candidate at the coming elections; the Comte de l'Estorade proposed that his own wife, a very tactful negotiator, should try her feminine persuasion with the artist. The Comte also said that Madame de l'Estorade was suffering from a nervous attack brought on by the shock of having had their little daughter, Naïs, nearly run over a week earlier. The child was saved at the last minute by a stranger who rushed at the horses' heads. This stranger continually shadowed Madame de l'Estorade.

Dorlange, for a slight cast upon Marie-Gaston by the Duc de Rhétoré, had compelled the Duke to fight a duel, in which the latter was wounded.

When the Comte de l'Estorade, his wife, and Naïs went to visit the sculptor's studio, Madame de l'Estorade recognized the stranger, as did Naïs, who cried: "Oh, you are the gentleman who saved me!" Dorlange presently showed his guests a statue of St. Ursula, commissioned from a country convent. Unknown to Madame de l'Estorade, Dorlange had used her for a model in making this statue. She reminded him, he said, of a lady he had known in Italy named Lanty. Madame de l'Estorade noticed a handsome Italian woman at the studio who was both housekeeper and model to Dorlange.

The sculptor became a frequent guest at the De l'Estorade home. But the eldest son, Armand, did not like him: he said he looked like the portraits of Danton and considered that a statuette of his mother presented to the Comte looked like a milliner's apprentice. Dorlange, writing to his friend Marie-

Gaston, told him that he had discovered his hitherto unknown father. A waiter at the *Café des Arts* had warned Dorlange that a little old man, untidy and marked by smallpox, was watching him. This was Jacques Bricheteau, a wonderful organist. He evaded Dorlange. But one day the sculptor received a letter postmarked Sweden. It was from his anonymous father, who told him he must enter politics, his aptitude being vouched for by a friend who had shadowed him. The father gave him an order on his bankers, told him that for a time he must continue to be a sculptor, and that he would soon receive an order for a statue of St. Ursula for the convent.

Dorlange bought a house, took shares in a newspaper, and executed the St. Ursula—all according to his father's instructions; then he awaited further orders. The duel he had fought with Marie-Gaston's brother-in-law helped his chances of election.

According to his father's orders, Dorlange sent his statue to a convent at Arcis-sur-Aube, and himself soon followed it, after receiving a draft on the bankers in the name of "*Monsieur le Comte de Sallenauve, known as Dorlange, Rue de l'Ouest, No.* 42."

At Arcis Dorlange, to his surprise, was met by Jacques Bricheteau, who had previously avoided him. This man conducted Dorlange to the Hôtel de la Poste, where he was introduced to his father, the Marquis de Sallenauve, a very tall, very thin, and very bald man. He was calm in receiving his son and also while Bricheteau gave a rhetorical account of his life before asking Dorlange if he would consent to take M. de Sallenauve's name and be acknowledged as his son. On Dorlange's consent, the father produced deeds, pedigrees, letters-patent, and many documents to prove the antiquity of the Sallenauve family. After dinner, the three repaired to the notary's office, where deeds were drawn, and Dorlange emerged as the Comte de Sallenauve and possessor of the Château d'Arcis, which his father purchased for a hundred and eighty thousand francs. In describing all this to Marie-Gaston, Dorlange confessed his lack of filial respect and affection. He continued: "Supposing this man were not my father, were not even the Marquis de Sallenauve, as he assumes to be; suppos-

ing that, like that luckless Lucien de Rubempré—whose story made such a noise at the time—I were wrapped in the coils of some serpent of the type of the sham priest Carlos Herrera, and were to wake presently to the frightful truth!"

Strange to say, the new-found father left Arcis at daybreak. Through the influence of Mother Marie des Anges, of the Ursuline convent, who was Bricheteau's aunt, after much intricate wire-pulling, the newly created Count of Sallenauve was put up as a third candidate for Arcis.

Marie-Gaston joined his friend at Arcis and wrote a long account of Sallenauve's success. He described how Beauvisage had crushed and beaten Simon Giguet, "who wanted to take his seat with the Left Center," how Maxime de Trailles was trying to win Cécile Beauvisage, and how, by his splendid entertainments at the château, his fine equipage, and open-handed generosity, the new candidate was fast snuffing out Maxime de Trailles's elegance and Beauvisage's chances. Everybody noticed his likeness to Danton, who was quite a hero in his native province.

At the preliminary meeting, Sallenauve carried the day by his gifts of public speaking; but Maxime de Trailles dragged up the story of the handsome Italian he kept hidden in his house in Paris. Sallenauve now thought it best to relate this woman's history in a letter to Madame de l'Estorade. This is the story. One day, in Italy, a musician and spy named Benedetto brought his wife to Dorlange's studio to pose. She refused, and that night suffocated her husband and went to Dorlange, begging him to take her to Paris. She became his housekeeper and model, and he had had her voice trained. She was now ready to appear in public. How to launch her was a puzzle. Would Madame de l'Estorade lend her aid? Sallenauve also wrote that grief for his dead wife seemed to be unsettling Marie-Gaston's mind.

The election took place. The number of votes was 201. Beauvisage received 2; Giguet, 29; and Sallenauve, 170. Consequently, Charles de Sallenauve was elected.

The day after the election, Maxime de Trailles returned to Paris and called on Colonel Franchessini, on the staff of the Citizen-Militia. He described the election, ending with:

"How can you account for the fact that an old *tricoteuse*, formerly a friend of Danton's, and now the Mother Superior of an Ursuline convent, with the help of a nephew, an obscure Parisian organist whom she brought out as the masculine figurehead of her scheme, could have hoodwinked a whole constituency to such a point that this stranger actually polled an imposing majority?"

"Well, but someone knew him, I suppose."

"Not a soul, unless it were this old hypocrite. Till the moment of his arrival he had no fortune, no connections—not even a father! While he was taking his boots off he was made —Heaven knows how!—the proprietor of a fine estate. Then, in quite the same vein, a gentleman supposed to be a native of the place, from which he had absented himself for many years, presented himself with this ingenious schemer in a notary's office, acknowledged him post-haste as his son, and vanished again in the course of the night, no one knowing by which road he went. This trick having come off successfully, the Ursuline and her ally launched their nominee; Republicans, Legitimists, and Conservatives, the clergy, the nobility, the middle classes—one and all, as if bound by a spell cast over the whole land, came around to this favorite of the old nun-witch."

The two concluded it would be worth while to get Monsieur de Saint-Estève, head of the criminal police, to ferret out the true story of Dorlange and his supposed father. The elections had made Rastignac Minister of Public Works. He was friendly with Monsieur de l'Estorade, a zealous Conservative and influential in the Upper Chamber. Through De l'Estorade's friendship with Dorlange, now Sallenauve, Rastignac was enabled to meet the new member from Arcis and to study him at close range. In the meantime, Franchessini went to Rastignac about Saint-Estève, who wanted advancement. Under the name of Vautrin the latter had years before compelled Franchessini to fight a duel for Rastignac's advantage, a duel Rastignac had tried to prevent. Rastignac wanted to have no dealings with Vautrin; but, yielding to Franchessini's persuasions, he advised him to get Vautrin to turn over a new leaf, to come out in the world, to take up with some actress,

display luxury on this idol's account, and, by degrees, make connections through the people who gather round a famous actress as moths round a candle. This would get him classed among the third or fourth rate notabilities—and make of him a man possible to deal with. "Then," added Rastignac, "if he came to me and I were in power, I might listen to him."

Sallenauve was much discussed at the De l'Estorades', who were entertaining guests—Monsieur and Madame Octave de Camps. They learned that the Italian woman, Luigia, had fled from Dorlange's studio, and no one knew what had become of her. An under-servant said she had had a mysterious visitor, a middle-aged lady, handsomely dressed, who came in a carriage, and who managed their interviews with secrecy.

Madame de Camps had many conversations with Madame de l'Estorade about Sallenauve and her course of action regarding him. About this time, M. de l'Estorade was made very jealous by finding a letter from Marie-Gaston to his wife, in which the half-mad widower wrote that he had had a message from Madame de l'Estorade saying that on the death of her husband she was to marry Sallenauve.

To everyone's surprise, Sallenauve left Paris suddenly. A letter from him to Madame de l'Estorade informed her that he had followed Marie-Gaston to England, as his friend had been taken there to an insane asylum. Not long after this, Monsieur and Madame de l'Estorade thought it best to dismiss Sallenauve politely from their acquaintance.

A peasant woman now came forward to declare that she was a Sallenauve and that there was no Marquis de Sallenauve in existence. This information was furnished by Madame Beauvisage to Maxime de Trailles, who passed it on to Rastignac for the good of the party. Maxime took the papers to a lawyer, Desroches, who, during the interview, mentioned that he was dining out and was afterward to draw up a contract between a London impresario and a star, just discovered by Madame de Saint-Estève, who had a matrimonial agency.

Madame de Saint-Estève was none other than Vautrin's aunt, Jacqueline Collin. She had found the Italian woman with the beautiful voice. Vautrin called to see his relative and in the course of a long conversation the latter formed a plan:

Vautrin, as Count Halphertius, a Swedish lord, crazy about music and philanthropy, should take great interest in the new singer. He would be her recognized patron, and Jacques and Jacquelin Collin must make her reign brilliant and herself wealthy for the sake of their own advancement.

When Vautrin called to meet the singer, his aunt and accomplice did not know him, so perfect was his disguise. He introduced the *diva* to Sir Francis Drake, who engaged her for the London opera. Madame de Saint-Estève gave a dinner to which various journalists and other well-known men were invited. This was the dinner to which Desroches was going.

Luigia was singing in London when Sallenauve, about to leave Marie-Gaston, was joined by Jacques Bricheteau, who had come from Paris to tell him of the plot against him. They decided to return at once to Paris. In London, Sallenauve saw the announcement of Signora Luigia at Her Majesty's Theater. He was struck by the name, and went to the opera, where Luigia was a great success in Paesiello's *Nina, o la Pazza per Amore.* While Luigia was receiving compliments in the green-room, Sallenauve's card was handed to her. She left her admirers and hastily returned to her apartments, where he was awaiting her. Sallenauve wished to renew their relations; but Luigia would not consent, although she told him she loved him. There was no common future, she said, for them, for Dorlange had forsaken art for a political career. They parted forever. Sallenauve's regrets for the life of Dorlange, the sculptor, were silenced by Bricheteau, who pictured his brilliant future.

The Chambers were opened; Sallenauve had not been present at the royal sitting, and his absence had caused some sensation in the Democratic party. Maxime was ready with a petition from the peasant woman. The legality of the election was questioned; but Rastignac's damaging speech was interrupted by the culprit's entrance.

"Danton minus the smallpox," a voice cried, as Sallenauve went up to the tribune; and everyone noticed the likeness to that fiery orator.

The member for Arcis gave a fine defense. The president then put the question of the validity of Sallenauve's election to vote. He was admitted and took the oaths.

THE MIDDLE CLASSES (1854)

This novel was left unfinished by Balzac, and it is supposed to have been completed by Charles Rabou, whom Balzac chose to continue it. Balzac had been at work upon it a long time, frequently laying it aside for other things. It appears from his correspondence that it was very nearly finished at the time of his death, and all the principal scenes were sketched out, if not entirely finished, even to the last chapter.

HE Thuillier family occupied one of those great houses in Paris which, formerly the abode of the nobility, retain traces of former grandeur. Mademoiselle Thuillier owned this house, having by saving and clever investing gradually become rich. This remarkable woman ruled her brother, a retired government clerk, handsome but empty-headed, and the insignificant wife his sister had chosen for him. She rented the floors of the house not used by the family, and held a salon every Sunday evening with her tenants and a few friends.

Among the frequenters of her salon were Monsieur Dutocq, a government clerk, Monsieur and Madame Colleville, the latter handsome and ambitious, and their daughter, the pretty Céleste; Monsieur and Madame Phellion and their son, Félix, Monsieur a highly respected man in the *arrondissement* and Félix a student and professor of mathematics in the Royal College. Monsieur Minard, who had made a fortune in adulterating groceries but who was now a pattern of benevolence, with his wife and son, together with the lodger on the top floor, Monsieur de la Peyrade, were the remaining principal persons of the group.

Monsieur and Madame Thuillier had no children; but as Céleste Colleville was their godchild, they looked upon her as their own, and she had the promise of inheriting the united fortunes of Madame and Mademoiselle. The three young men aspired to her hand with differing motives—Félix, from affec-

tion, Julien Minard, from desire for her money, and De la Peyrade, with the desperate hope that it might save him from the abyss of degradation which, unknown to the simple group, yawned under his feet.

Théodose de la Peyrade had come to Paris a few years previously and had been admitted to the bar. He had not advanced in his profession, but continued as an advocate, devoting himself ostentatiously to the service of the poor. He was, in fact, an adventurer, of an honest family in the province, but a Tartuffe in character, who made trickery and hypocrisy his means of advancement in life. He had two associates in vice, Cérizet and the clerk Dutocq. The latter, also masking under false pretenses, while highly thought of by the Thuilliers, had introduced Peyrade to them. Cérizet was a man of powerful intellect, who had formerly edited a ministerial journal, but who, sinking lower and lower, now kept a sort of quick-loan shop for the lowest of the poor in the most disreputable quarter of Paris. These two had befriended Peyrade in a time of extremity and had loaned him fifty thousand francs. They held him by this chain, now that he was rising in the world and hoped to marry the young heiress, Céleste. The three held together, although each suspected the other of treachery. Cérizet's appearance was so terrible, from a life of dissipation, that he never came with the others to the Latin Quarter. Peyrade began his flatteries by making love to Madame Colleville, by praising Brigitte's cooking, and by laughing at Thuillier's jokes.

Cérizet had concocted a plan to make Brigitte Thuillier buy a house near the Madeleine. The procedure was illegal on account of some difficulty with the builders, but it would prove profitable. Cérizet himself intended to rent from her and sublet to actual tenants, making a large profit.

De la Peyrade agreed to this, because it fell in with his plans. To carry them out, he first suggested to Thuillier, an incompetent fool, that he should obtain a seat in the Municipal Council, and won over old Phellion, virtuous but pompous, to voting for him against his own convictions. He promised to get Thuillier the cross of the Legion of Honor and to write a political pamphlet for him.

His next step was to take advantage of Brigitte's joy in the election of her idolized brother to persuade her into buying the house, as necessary to his new dignity.

He then approached Thuillier with his plan of marrying Céleste. Thuillier agreed to this, and the two influenced Brigitte, the supreme power in the family, to approve and to promise her own and Madame Thuillier's fortunes as her dowry. In addition, he informed Thuillier that as it was very necessary to win over the girl's mother by flattery and judicious management, it would be better to say nothing of these plans for the present.

The only thing in the way of this match was the inclination of Céleste herself. She loved Félix. She was an ardent Catholic and talked often with him about religion, as he was indifferent to the faith. The two were tacitly engaged, but De la Peyrade, having managed the property question, turned himself to embroiling the lovers, which he did by adroitly fostering their religious differences.

In these operations De la Peyrade had acted entirely for himself. He had outwitted his two companions and was preparing to cast them off as soon as he felt himself to be strong enough. They knew this well, and Cérizet prepared a pitfall for him. He summoned him to a visit at his own sordid stronghold. Cérizet was talking with Mother Cardinal, a fish-hawker with a voice of iron, when he entered, and seemed preoccupied with a new idea, but almost immediately turned his attention to De la Peyrade, and put it to him plainly that he must get him the lease of the new house, or he would foreclose one of his acceptances. This was a blow to De la Peyrade, for, despite his success, he could not command the money. He therefore promised to bring the lease to a dinner on the following Tuesday.

Good luck seemed coming Cérizet's way. Madame Cardinal had told him of the approaching death of an old uncle of hers, a miser. Cérizet accepted her proposition to help her carry off his gold before his death. This scheme was foiled by the appearance of a little old man at the very moment when Cérizet had his hand on the treasure, and even in his success he found himself in danger of the police.

This old man was Monsieur du Portail, who occupied the

first floor with his niece, a girl crazed by some misfortune. He spoke with an air of authority, and instead of having Cérizet arrested, commanded him to call on him the next morning.

At this call it devolved that the niece was a cousin of De la Peyrade's; that her malady was one that physicians said would be cured by marriage; and that M. du Portail intended that Peyrade should marry her. Cérizet told the old man something of Peyrade's plans; that Dutocq's introduction of him to the Thuilliers was intended ultimately to repay himself and Cérizet from Céleste's dowry, and was told in return that the miser, Torpillon, had left his fortune to the crazed girl, Mademoiselle Lydie de la Peyrade. Du Portail further explained that this was a restitution, as years before the jewels had been stolen from Lydie's mother, a celebrated actress, and confided by the actual thief to Torpillon, who had afterward refused to renounce them. Du Portail had discovered this and had compelled Torpillon to make a will in the girl's favor, not only of the jewels, but of all his property. Thus Cérizet could see that Peyrade would be rich if he married his cousin. Du Portail therefore proposed to him, as the price of his own silence in regard to the attempted robbery, to buy Peyrade's acceptances from Dutocq, thus getting the former into his own power. Cérizet agreed to this, with an idea of making an additional commission himself out of the transaction.

De la Peyrade came to this dinner in a gay mood. He coolly told Cérizet that he could not have the lease of the house, as Mademoiselle intended to look after her own renting, and as for Dutocq's acceptances, he should have the money for them. He then left, humming a tune, and paid their bill at the desk, as a bit of effrontery, after carelessly dismissing Cérizet's proposition that he should marry his cousin instead of Céleste.

Cérizet, downcast at his double failure, confessed it to M. du Portail, who merely remarked that he should have to look after the business himself.

De la Peyrade was in the habit of attending early mass in his parish church. He had noticed a woman of saintly appearance and plain dress watching him constantly. On the morning of the dinner he had spoken to her and found that she desired to confide to him, as his reputation as a friend of the poor was

great, the sum of twenty-five thousand francs, a legacy. He, promising to invest them for her, and giving her no receipt, found himself, just in time, able to rid himself of his shackles by paying Dutocq, which he did to the last cent. She was a woman who served Monsieur Picot, the astronomer, nearly blind and absent-minded, and this money was the result of her thieving.

It was not so good for Peyrade as it seemed, to keep the whole business of renting Mademoiselle Thuillier's house in her own hands. The old *bourgeoise*, feeling a timidity in doing business in a fashionable quarter, put herself entirely into the hands of a tenant who suddenly appeared, a Hungarian countess, Madame Godollo. The Thuilliers decided to occupy their new house, and help was needed to furnish their apartment suitably. This help Madame Godollo, a woman of most lofty pretensions to fashion, was ready to give. Wonderful bargains in furniture, draperies, and carpets were secured through her agency, and she soon occupied the position of social mentor to these good people, unused to the customs of polite society. De la Peyrade felt that his own influence was waning, and, worse than this, the Countess Godollo made no pretense of her opposition to the match with Céleste.

Another thing troubled him. There was a mysterious obstacle to his obtaining the cross for Thuillier, which he had been sincere in promising. He felt that he had reached a point where he must strike a decisive blow.

Accordingly one morning, while they were working over the famous pamphlet, he stopped and refused to go on. Thuillier, alarmed, asked him the reason. He replied frankly that Madame Godollo's influence was against his marriage, and said that if the friendship was to continue the matter must be settled within two weeks. Brigitte, on being consulted, agreed, saying nevertheless that these machinations were not to her taste; and Céleste was told that she must decide between Peyrade and Félix within that time.

At first the liberty to follow her own inclinations pleased the young girl, but De la Peyrade had not miscalculated the force of her religious convictions. The two quarreled, and the quarrel would have been irreconcilable had it not been for the inter-

ference of Madame Godollo, which brought the affair to a standstill. By this, De la Peyrade became fully certain of the hostility of the Countess, and determined to try his powers upon her. On the day Céleste's decision was to be announced, he called upon her in her magnificent rooms in the *entresol*.

He was kept waiting some time in the reception-room, and, chancing to look out of the window, he beheld a little old man decorated with many orders stepping into an emblazoned carriage. The Countess entered, with apologies for tardiness on account of another visitor of importance. Her attitude to himself was one of mystery and possible coquetry. When he left her he thought that a secret love for himself might be the cause of her behavior. This from a woman skilled in the arts of attraction, surrounded as she was with the evidences of wealth, influenced him, although in his dealings with women he was usually guided merely by motives of policy. Her management of him had been so adroit that later, when Thuillier told him that Céleste accepted him, but entirely as a sacrifice to their wishes, he allowed his cold judgment to be warped, and instead of clinching the matter himself he suggested waiting a little longer.

The great pamphlet was at length finished, and Thuillier haunted the book-stalls to witness the extent of its sale. To his humiliation, only four copies were sold. The bookseller then suggested a breakfast to the press, which the misguided man gave, and which contributed still more to his humiliation, as almost nobody came and those who did come were of the lowest order.

In the midst of this sad feast, the news was brought that the whole edition had been seized, as containing illegal printed matter. Thuillier and his companion immediately withdrew, the former in the greatest agitation.

In the despair following this bit of ill luck, Peyrade again sought the Countess. At this second visit she led him conclusively to believe in her love for him. She declared also that she had great influence in high quarters, and told him that it was at her behest the pamphlets had been seized. Peyrade was all the more ready to believe in this influence from another

glimpse of the little old man, decorated with orders, going from her door, and from seeing letters addressed to the *Commandant* waiting to be posted in the foyer.

The Countess intimated that what she had done was for the purpose of deterring him from the match with the little *bourgeoise* and mating him with a nobler, more congenial soul in herself. Losing his head entirely, Peyrade declared to her that the struggle was over and that she had won. He then rushed from the house in a mood of great exaltation.

The next morning he disclosed to Thuillier that the seizure of the pamphlets was an irremediable misfortune, and took the high hand with him in a quarrel, in which Brigitte soon participated. He renounced his claim to Céleste, and gave Brigitte no great satisfaction when she coarsely reminded him of the ten thousand francs given for the promised cross, which had not been forthcoming.

De la Peyrade had fallen completely into the Countess Godollo's trap. Having done her work, she now disappeared, leaving a letter giving the information that by embroiling him with the Thuilliers and Collevilles she had blessed him in disguise, for a richer bride than Céleste awaited him. She referred him to M. du Portail, Rue Honoré-Chevalier, who was expecting him.

The shock of this disappointment was too much for the Provençal. His health gave way, and an attack of fever confined him to his room for some time. The Thuilliers, on their part, reveled in the freedom resulting from his absence. The brother strutted like a turkey-cock, and Brigitte indulged in all her petty economies and *bourgeois* tricks.

Still another turn in the wheel brought to Thuillier the opportunity of buying a journal, *L'Echo de la Bièvre*. De la Peyrade had formed some feeble resolutions of leading a respectable life after his illness, but could not resist this chance of regaining his ascendancy. Meeting Thuillier opportunely, he proposed to him to buy the journal and to install himself as editor-in-chief, at an excellent salary, with Cérizet as manager. The pretense was that it would insure Thuillier's election to the Chamber. The latter, inflated with success, and in spite of his former experiences with the adroit Peyrade, yielded to his

clever arguments, and fell more completely under his power than before.

Du Portail now had occasion to interview Cérizet again. He discovered him to be deeply in debt. His debts must be paid before he could take the place offered.

"I see I've got to stand the money myself," said Du Portail, "but the question is, whether your presence in the affair is worth it."

"*Dame!*" said Cérizet; "if I were only installed there, I would soon have De la Peyrade and Thuillier at loggerheads."

Accordingly, he was installed, for to checkmate Peyrade was what Du Portail wanted most.

The two concocted a story to be told Thuillier: that the twenty-five thousand francs, of which they had learned the history, had been obtained from the police, as a reward for De la Peyrade's inserting some traitorous paragraphs in the pamphlet, leading to its seizure.

Cérizet laid his plans with great skill to carry this out, and brought things to such a point that Thuillier demanded of Peyrade information as to where he got the twenty-five thousand francs which came in so opportunely for buying his acceptances from Dutocq.

The Provençal saw that without confession he would have the newly recovered future cut from beneath his feet. So he told them frankly that they were the savings of a domestic that had been confided to him, and offered to summon this person by a note.

Madame Lambert, the saintly thief, appeared. She at first denied the transaction, but on Peyrade's calling the others to witness that Madame, according to her own statement, never had twenty-five thousand francs, and consequently could not have given that sum to him; and that, as the notary, Depuis, with whom he fancied he had placed them, had left Paris that morning, carrying with him all his clients' money, he had a clear account with Madame, and——

"The notary Depuis has absconded!" cried Madame Lambert; "the wretch! the villain! when only this morning he took the communion!"

"That was doubtless to pray for a safe journey," replied Peyrade.

"Monsieur can talk lightly enough about it," continued Madame Lambert, "but that brigand has carried off all my savings."

De la Peyrade had triumphed once more. The marriage was again arranged and the day arrived when the ceremony was to be performed. The Provençal felt that his struggle to achieve respectability and fortune was over, as the wedding-party were gathered in the drawing-room preparatory to going to the notary's, when Henri came in to say that an aged gentleman, wearing decorations, had asked to be received on very urgent business.

The interview was enormously prolonged. Brigitte and even De la Peyrade himself were not above putting their eyes to the keyhole, to discover what was keeping Thuillier. At last the old gentleman was seen to get into an elegant carriage and drive rapidly away. Thuillier rejoined the others, and with a grave face thus addressed De la Peyrade:

"My dear De la Peyrade, you did not inform me that another proposal of marriage had been considered seriously by you. Were I in your place, I should go at once to see Monsieur du Portail."

"Again that name! It pursues me like remorse!" cried De la Peyrade.

"Yes, go to him at once; he awaits you. That is an indispensable preliminary before we proceed further. When you shall have seen this honest gentleman—well, if you persist in demanding Céleste's hand, we may carry out our plans; until then we shall take no further steps."

De la Peyrade had at last met his match. Du Portail confessed himself to be the great detective Corentin, and he disclosed to the Provençal his power. He it was who had pursued him from the beginning, who had sent the Godollo, an adventuress, to the Thuilliers, who had annulled the promise of the cross, who had had the pamphlets seized; and he added that it had been his care to incite all the journals to a persecution of M. Thuillier, which must end in his political defeat.

Corentin offered to De la Peyrade, as the sole field in which

his abilities might now be exercised, a connection with the department of the police. The young man, seeing in every other direction he might turn only a *cul-de-sac*, felt this to be a not uncongenial solution of his difficulties.

When, later, Corentin confronted him with the darkest crime of his past, the ruin of his own cousin, Lydie, in the person of the girl herself, his yielding to the great man's domination was complete. He recalled and explained to him that chapter of his life, telling him that his uncle, victim of a diabolical intrigue, had fallen into a situation where his own daughter must be sacrificed, and that he, De la Peyrade, had been chosen to carry out this deadly plot. This was the secret of his determination that De la Peyrade should marry Lydie, for her father, De la Peyrade's uncle, had been his own dearest friend. De la Peyrade yielded to his fate and found thenceforth a legitimate outlet for his powers of intrigue in the service of the police.

His last attention to the Thuillier family was an editorial in *L'Echo*, in which he announced, in the name of the great statesman himself, that he had forever, and in the best interests of his constituency, renounced public life. To the great rage of that noble man, Thuillier, this resignation was completely effectual, and never again could he aspire to political distinction.

The Thuillier family soon moved back into the Latin Quarter, where they resumed their lives of sober, respectable, and worthy *bourgeoisie*, the honorable lives of the salvation of France—the Middle Classes.

JOHN BANIM

(Ireland, 1798–1842)

BOYNE WATER (1826)

The scenes of this tragic tale are laid in the time of the bitter civil war in Ireland between the partizans of King James II and his son-in-law, William of Orange.

ON the next day after James the Second was proclaimed King of Great Britain, a young Protestant gentleman and his sister, Robert and Esther Evelyn, were traveling along a rough road in the north of Ireland. While descending a hill, Esther's horse became unmanageable, and the young lady would have perished had it not been for a young Irishman and his sister, Edmund and Eva MacDonell, who came to their rescue and took the fatigued and frightened party of travelers to their own home in a glen near by.

On their way there, a strange, uncanny woman, Onagh by name, who lived in a cave and was deemed a witch, intercepted them and foretold to Eva MacDonell that she would love Robert Evelyn and might safely do so, though the blessing would come late; but said that in Esther Evelyn she saw the face which Edmund MacDonell must shun, on peril of dire sorrow.

At the MacDonells' home, the Evelyn party were entertained with generous hospitality, and soon after this Edmund and Eva MacDonell went to visit Evelyn and his sister at their cottage on the coast; and as the four young folks were all fresh of heart, enthusiastic and imaginative, and as peace, even the rare peace of sectarian toleration, was in the land, they naturally fell in love. Even their contrasts of character drew them to-

gether and helped to unite the fiery-spirited Eva with the matter-of-fact Robert Evelyn; and to make the weak and tender Esther love the bold and manly Edmund MacDonell.

Many delightful months were passed by the four lovers in the enjoyment of repeating the usual sweet vows, protestations, and caresses. But Evelyn was not yet twenty-one, and, moreover, was obliged from business reasons to make a lengthy voyage across the Atlantic. On returning home, Evelyn landed in Dublin and was met by MacDonell with the warmest greetings. But so heated was the political atmosphere by that time that a toast to King James could not be drunk in the tavern where they dined without raising a brawl.

On the first night that the united friends slept under the same roof, each was approached by clerical plotters, who sought to enlist the young men on their respective sides and who urged their causes so hotly that each was prevailed upon to make a conditional engagement to fight with the party to which by inheritance he belonged.

The young men journeyed together to MacDonell's home with a reserve and embarrassment between them never before known; but the long-awaited meeting was happy with the mutual embraces of brothers and sisters, and lovers.

The preparations for the double wedding went merrily on. On several occasions, however, the young lovers were each seriously disturbed by various incidents, rumors of Popish plots, despatches announcing the speedy landing of William of Orange in England, the secret drilling of Catholic peasants, conducted by Edmund, and tragic warnings to Esther from the witch, Onagh, that a shroud, not a bridal robe, awaited her. Nevertheless, the lovers, closing ears and eyes to all these omens, were determined to be married at the time appointed.

When the day and hour came, the guests, bridesmaids, and priest were ready. The Protestant clergyman, however, had not arrived. A disagreeable pause ensued. The company waited, hour after hour. At length, when darkness came, it was decided to proceed without the clergyman. In the midst of a heavy storm, Robert Evelyn and Eva MacDonell were married by the Catholic ceremonial.

At last the Protestant minister, Mr. Walker, arrived with

the tidings that William, Prince of Orange, had landed in England. This news convulsed the whole bridal party with discordant passions. Edmund was urged by the Catholics not to dishonor his name and blood by taking to his bosom a heretic. Evelyn and the Protestant clergyman denounced this as a breach of faith, and Evelyn was bidden by his friends to lead his sister away from that idolatrous roof. Eva and Edmund MacDonell felt themselves insulted by such language, and retorted by accusing Evelyn of being a secret plotter against King James and against the very friends who would take him to their bosoms.

"Scandalous men!" cried out the old priest from the altar to both parties; "interrupt not the conferring of a sacrament; tear not asunder those whom God is about to make one. Peace! and let the marriage be finished."

The words "traitor" and "betrayer" were fiercely bandied to and fro. Edmund sprang to the altar and seized his sister's cold hand.

"I forbid this marriage!" he said. "And I," said Eva, "renounce the former one; your own priest there has told you it is invalid. Think it so, and farewell, Robert—forever. Brother, your hand."

"Be that as it may," Evelyn retorted, "this lady shall never be his bride," and he led his sister Esther down the altar-steps.

Just then a screaming, discordant voice at the side window, accompanied by frantic hand-clapping, cried "Never!" A glare of red light broke through all the apertures in the chapel; and from window after window was heard the shrill voice of the witch Onagh, "Never! Never!" rising above the chapel-roof like a tongue of the tempest.

This wretched ending of what had been expected would be the happiest of events filled all four lovers with the bitterest feelings. Edmund and his sister took public and active part in organizing and encouraging the militia troops to uphold King James. Evelyn at first made several earnest efforts to reach and talk with his bride. But while she saved his life from attacks of her own partizans, she told him that henceforth they were strangers. "Farewell, sir! Poor renegade

from the altar and the throne; perjured in love and loyalty to man, to Heaven, and to me, farewell!"

It was rumored that the Catholics had conspired to murder the Protestants on the ninth of the month, and Evelyn removed his sister Esther to what he was told was the safest place for Protestants in this crisis, the city of Derry.

A regiment of King James's army was just on the point of entering this town, when the populace shut the city gates in the face of the soldiers. The dreaded 9th of December, 1688, passed in quiet. Nevertheless, the Protestant revolt spread. But Evelyn still hesitated to take up arms for the Prince of Orange and so further estrange his wife from him. While deliberating what course to adopt, he made a journey to his family estate. Unfortunately, approaching his home in the night, he found it occupied and plundered by a roving company of Catholic guerrillas, called "the Rapparees." In a fray between them and the Protestants, Evelyn's house was burned, he nearly lost his life, and was saved only by the wit and courage of an Irish peasant girl, Moya Laherty. Indignant at the conduct of these miscreants, and at a king and government in whose name such lawless outrages were perpetrated, Evelyn was moved openly and actively to join the Protestant troops, and became the captain of a company. Journeying to Derry to join his sister, he fell in with a company of soldiers commanded by Edmund MacDonell and would have been made a prisoner if MacDonell in his generosity had not refused to accept his surrender. In a night journey together, the two young men ignored all differences for the time, and helped each other through terrible dangers both from inhospitable Nature and human foes. Near Red Bay, Eva, with a number of the MacDonell retainers, met them, protected them from a band of their pursuers, and conducted them first to the house of Father MacDonell and next to the great cliff by the sea, called "The Fair-head."

On the way Evelyn tried many times to lead Eva into some acknowledgment of her forgiveness of the past, but for a long time in vain. At length they toilsomely climbed to the summit of the Fair-head and looked off over the ocean far and wide, even to the Isles of Scotland. After gazing for some time spell-

bound at the grand view, Evelyn and Eva climbed down a narrow fissure between huge basaltic columns, which made a tremendous staircase a thousand feet high from the shore to the top of the bluff. Here, overcome with emotion, Evelyn begged Eva to forgive the past and assured her of his unchanging love. Eva assured him that, however much she had felt alienated, she recognized the bond of her marriage vow and her heart could not be indifferent to his dangers and his affection.

But when they considered their future course, both felt that the political and religious causes to which they had respectively committed themselves could not with honor be abandoned. Each urged the other to withdraw from the contest and remain neutral. But neither was willing to do so.

Bitter as the trial was, it was at length agreed that neither had a right to force the inclinations of the other, and that, while the political conflict lasted, they should live as strangers to each other, except in heart, until they could meet in undivided love. Resolute as each was against yielding up the cause that seemed so imperative, yet both felt the pity and the unreasonableness of their strife.

"Oh, Robert!" cried Eva, "did God ever ordain that His children should be cruelly tortured merely by a difference of forms in loving Him? Why are hearts thus separated?"

"Because," replied Evelyn, "from the beginning of the world, ambitious princes and churchmen, captains and politicians, have deliberately made God's name a watchword for monopoly."

"And when," asked Eva, "shall religion bring peace and good-will to men?"

"When men of every sect," answered her husband, "become sufficiently awake to their own happiness to separate religion from politics, and churchmen from politicians; to bow down reverently and sincerely before the minister of religion as such, but to confine him to his ministry."

Soon after this, a party of Protestant horsemen surprised them and arrested Edmund MacDonell. All the explanations and pleadings of Evelyn for his friend were in vain, and all the mitigation of the arrest that he could obtain was that MacDonell should remain as Evelyn's prisoner, only giving his parole not

to escape. Evelyn went to Derry to join his sister Esther, Edmund attending him as a prisoner.

Here Evelyn gave MacDonell permission to visit his betrothed as often as he pleased, and the two lovers enjoyed uninterrupted dreams of a happy future. One day when commissioners from the besieged city went forth to King James's camp to treat with him and his generals concerning a surrender, Evelyn and MacDonell were permitted to accompany the commissioners. A Scottish sergeant pointed MacDonell out to the Catholic commander. In spite of the explanation offered, the two brothers-in-law were arrested as traitors, tied back to back, and a dozen musketeers were ordered out to execute them. Their eyes were bandaged and the friends had grasped hands, as the click of the locks was heard, only to have their bandages pulled off and MacDonell offered his life if he would shoot his friend Evelyn. In a mad rage, MacDonell turned the musket on the tormenting general and singed his hair with his shot. The soldiers leaped upon the two friends, who in their turn grappled with their foes. In the midst of the *mêlée* King James rode up, and MacDonell appealed to him for protection. After much discussion it was decided that neither man was a traitor and that, under the safe-conduct promised by King James, the two should go back to Derry.

The siege dragged slowly along amidst terrible sufferings. There were thirty thousand people in the city and only ten days' provision for them. To protect Esther, it was decided that she ought to marry MacDonell as soon as possible. The young men agreed that they could not ask a Protestant clergyman to perform the ceremony, and to get a priest was difficult. So it was determined to summon Eva and Father MacDonell, and a message was sent to them. Weeks elapsed, however, and no answer came. Edmund was reduced to one coarse meal a day, and Esther's pallid cheek and sunken eyes curdled her lover's blood with gloomy apprehensions. At last a note was brought back from Eva, advising them that she was now in the Irish camp, attended by the old clergyman, and that four nights from the date of her writing she would meet them.

The three in disguise contrived to pass the lines and get out to Columb-Kill's well, where Eva and the old priest met them.

The priest had already begun the marriage ceremony when a body of Protestant horsemen came down upon them and arrested them all. The soldiers took the three who had come out from Derry back to the besieged city, Esther screaming wildly because of the treachery of Onagh, the witch, by whose information the marriage had again been frustrated. The supply of food in the besieged city fell so low that considerable sums were offered for cats, rats, mice, horse-blood, rawhides, and such like offal. More than ten thousand of these people had died. Edmund was laid low with a fever, and when he was well enough to totter to his Esther's house, he found her wasted to a shadow and in the last stages of consumption. After a moment of frenzied agitation, he burst out of the room into the street and ran about like a maniac, demanding food. Some rude men, pitying him, gave him food and wine, with which he sought Esther. Finding her in church, he bore her frantically to the walls whence they could look out on the river, where an English fleet, with store-ships, under the command of General Kirke, were attempting to ascend the stream to relieve the besieged people. Ship after ship essayed in vain to break the ponderous boom with which the besiegers had obstructed the river. At length, amidst a hoarse cry of joy, one strong ship struck the huge barricade and broke it in pieces, and the fleet sailed in with its succor for the starving city. Edmund exultantly called on Esther to eat, and to hear the shouts that hailed their rescue. But the shock of joy, added to the strain of famine and despair, and the voice of the dreaded witch Onagh, which at this moment sounded in her ears, was too much for her. Edmund caught her up, but when he saw she was dead he swooned with her in his arms.

Both of the young men now fell victims to the fever, and Eva came to nurse them. Edmund had been dismissed from his regiment with a degrading sentence, and the injustice of this, as well as the bitter grief from Esther's loss, rankled in his heart. After they had one evening secretly visited Esther's grave, they departed together for the MacDonell homestead. When they reached it they found their old home half burned and the bodies of their followers, who had dared to remain by it, hanging from trees near it. The blind harper, Carolan, was

sitting on his accustomed stone, smilingly singing a merry tune; but on the blood-clotted hearthstone lay the corpse of Father MacDonell, his head covered with red gashes that told what a brave fight he had fought against his foes. Over the mangled corpse, the half-crazed brother and sister clasped hands and swore a terrible oath of revenge. Eva's screams called down upon them General Kirke and his English soldiers. Edmund seized his father's sword from his dead hand and cut down the first invaders. Evelyn and the Protestant clergyman in vain sought to save their friends by exhibiting their protection papers. Then the Rapparees came to their rescue and almost strangled General Kirke. More English soldiers came up. Edmund denounced Evelyn (as he kept him back from a useless attack on the overwhelming force of the enemy) as one who held him to betray him to the foe; the Rapparee captain struck Evelyn with the butt of his pistol, and he dropped insensible. When he regained his senses, all were gone except the peasant girl, Moya Laherty, who held his head on her lap. She had bandaged his wounded head, and told him that MacDonell had been called away and that his sister had been carried off by the dissolute and cruel General Kirke. The girl further urged him, as all his friends had abandoned him and as so many enemies were seeking his life, to go away with her to her cabin in a distant valley and give her the peace and love she had longed for, while she served and comforted him. Evelyn refused and thus incurred the unscrupulous enmity of the jealous girl.

Soon after this he found himself arrested by General Kirke as one who had aided rebels; but after investigation and a duel with Kirke, in which he nearly perished, he was appointed an aide-de-camp to General Schomberg, in command of King William's troops. After several months' service in Ireland, he was sent to London to carry despatches to King William. On the eve of his departure he found among his belongings a sealed note from Eva, returning her marriage ring and declaring that his course had made their separation indispensable; and besides that, she added, ruin and degradation had come between them. This brought to a horrid certainty his worst apprehensions on Eva's account in connection with General Kirke.

In London, Evelyn, with his deputation, was summoned to King William's palace at Kensington, and there he caught sight of a youth whose dress, face, and figure were strangely like those of Eva disguised in man's attire. In a secluded spot, the youth drew a dagger from his bosom, half bared it, and kissed it fervently. But when Evelyn advanced a step, the unknown one darted into the thick shrubbery and disappeared. This sight awakened the most dreadful thoughts in Evelyn's brain, suggesting that Eva had given herself over to wild and ruinous revenge on King William.

On returning to Ireland, after many months, Evelyn anxiously sought to reach and speak with his wife. By the kindness of General Sarsfield (to whom he frankly told his story and his object), he was invited to accompany him to a reception at Dublin Castle. There he saw and spoke with King James and caught a glimpse of his wife. He pushed toward her to speak to her, but the bustling group of courtiers and ladies-in-waiting obstructed his passage until she had disappeared.

Rejoining the Protestant army, of which King William had personally taken command, Evelyn took a prominent part as an aide-de-camp in the famous battle of "Boyne Water." His fidelity and intrepidity exposed him to the greatest dangers. At length he was cut off from his comrades and madly struck at the band of horsemen that surrounded him. "To the traitor's heart!" cried a furious assailant; and, as he fell, stunned by a sword-cut, the features of Eva MacDonell swam before his eyes, and Evelyn believed that her sword had been raised to shed his blood.

When he regained his senses, he found himself the prisoner of General Sarsfield, of King James's army. With him Evelyn went to Dublin, and the next morning at the royal castle he overheard his Eva reproaching King James for having so prematurely deserted the field at the battle of the Boyne. Amidst the confusion attending the departure of the King and his retinue for France, Evelyn found opportunity to address a few hurried words to his wife, assuring her of his continued love and begging her to accept his protection and make him happy again. But with a strangely mingled expression of coldness, loftiness, and deepest sorrow, she silently walked away.

With General Sarsfield, Evelyn was taken to Limerick. At a Rapparee camp, Evelyn discovered Edmund MacDonell, acting as their secret commander. But when Evelyn anxiously inquired for Eva, Edmund angrily denounced him as a knave and liar who had basely deserted his wife.

On returning to Limerick, Evelyn was detained there many trying months while the siege of the city dragged along. At length King William departed, leaving General Ginkle in command of the English forces, but empowered to make any terms of peace with the enemy that seemed at all fair. General Sarsfield and the Catholics had lost their patience, waiting for the promised fleet and reënforcements from France. Even the Papist clergy strongly urged a treaty, and at length, on a memorable day, the two commanders-in-chief of the opposing armies, with their lawyers and advisers, met in General Ginkle's camp to discuss and sign a treaty. On this very morning, as Evelyn stood on the walls of Limerick, he encountered James MacDonell. After a long and excited colloquy, in which Carolan, Onagh, and Moya Laherty soon joined, it came out that the stories that had so alienated Edmund and Eva MacDonell from Evelyn, and filled him with suspicion and indignation against them, were chiefly lies and treacheries, for which the revengeful Moya Laherty was responsible. In shame and remorse, the peasant girl confessed that the story that Evelyn had abandoned his wife at the MacDonell homestead and sent back word that he was weary of her love was only an invention of her own. It was Moya also who put the false letter from Eva among Evelyn's effects, and in disguise stole his wedding-ring and other precious tokens and sent them back to his wife, as if he had cast her off. The face that Evelyn had seen in his camp, and again in the garden of King William at Kensington, and on the battlefield of the Boyne Water, seeking his life's blood, was not Eva's, as he had supposed, but that of her younger brother James, whose features strikingly resembled his sister's. James, unknown to Evelyn, had returned from Spain to help the Catholic party by assassinating King William. Evelyn's strongest wish now was to return to Eva's hand their former bond of union, the marriage ring. Soon, conducted by Carolan, Eva appeared. Onagh, Carolan, and James MacDonell disclosed to her the

recently discovered tricks, falsehoods, and misunderstandings that had caused so much trouble, and how the blind harper, Carolan, by long journeys in France and Ireland, had brought the truth to light. The dreadful wrongs that Onagh had suffered at the hands of the MacDonells' dead brother, Donald, were also rehearsed. Eva held out her arms to Evelyn and in a moment was clasped to his heart. But in the very midst of the happiness of reconciliation, a Rapparee messenger came in, seeking General Sarsfield, with the news that Edmund had fallen into the hands of General Ginkle and was about to be shot. Eva, seeking General Sarsfield's aid, learned that he was in the English commander's camp, arranging a treaty of surrender; and inasmuch as she knew that a French fleet was sailing for Limerick to reënforce the Catholic army, she then dashed off to General Ginkle's camp to save her brother and prevent General Sarsfield from signing the treaty of surrender. But the moment before that in which she gained audience with the Irish-Catholic commander he had signed the treaty, and although notified of the near approach of the French fleet, General Sarsfield would not go back on his word of honor. The signing of the treaty barely saved Edmund's life; but it led in a few days to the embarkation upon the French fleet of most of General Sarsfield's officers and men. The MacDonell brothers determined to sail with them to France, to continue fighting for King James's cause.

Eva was at first resolved, in loyalty to the faith and the King for whom she had so struggled and suffered, to go with her brothers. But Evelyn's pleadings had shaken her determination. Her brothers had already stepped into the boat, and Eva, her eyes blinded with tears, was about to follow them, when Evelyn cried: "And do you indeed leave me with but this mocking symbol of an eternal fate, once solemnly sworn at the altar?" and, as Evelyn caught her arm, he showed her their marriage ring and replaced it on her finger. Her brothers, not displeased, saw which way God and woman's nature at last swayed her. They embraced their sister, while she clung sobbing to them. Then Evelyn clasped her in his arms and the boat put off, leaving husband and wife united at last.

SABINE BARING-GOULD

(England, 1834–1906)

GRETTIR THE OUTLAW (1860)

This story is a transcription of an Icelandic saga entitled *Grettir the Strong*. With only a Danish grammar of Icelandic available, Mr. Baring-Gould began the translation, first having to learn Danish. He was then a schoolmaster, and wrote after school hours. He had visited Iceland (1861) and had gone over the ground of Grettir's experiences, so that he had a full knowledge of the country. When Iceland was actually discovered is not known, nor is it known when the first Europeans made it their home, but the definite settlement began about 870, when many Norwegians refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of Harold Fairhair. By the year in which Grettir was born, 997, more than fifty thousand persons were distributed along the coast of the island, where haymaking was practicable, the interior being largely a volcanic desert interspersed with rounded mountains of ice, called *jokulls*. Many of the settlers came from the northern portions of the British Isles, some Norse and some Gaelic. There was no government, each first settler of a locality directing affairs around him. Feuds among the various groups, as well as among individuals, were common, and blood atonement and blood-money settlement were a part of the unwritten law of the time. A sort of parliament was established in 930, called the Althing, with four Things, or subcourts, one for each quarter of the island. The Althing convened once a year, at a place called Thingvellir, for the Lawman to hear grievances and pass judgment. There were no primitive people in Iceland, Eskimos or the like, so far as known, when the Europeans discovered it. The population is, and always has been, entirely European. The farmhouses are built mainly of turf, with front and rear gables of wood. Being almost under the Arctic Circle, Iceland has no darkness in summer and no sunlight in winter. About two hundred and fifty years after the death of Grettir his history was committed to writing, and during this time deeds of other men, as well as fantastic legends, were grafted upon it; but the main facts of his life are true history.

RETTIR THE STRONG was the son of a well-to-do farmer of Biarg, in Iceland, and was descended from some of the great nobles of Norway. He was not good-looking as a boy. He had reddish hair, a pale face full of freckles, and light-blue eyes. But he was broadly built, and he grew to be an immense man. His disposition was wilful, headstrong, and obstinate. Never did he do anything cheerfully, and it was easier to let him alone than to receive his sullen assistance.

When Grettir was fourteen years old, a friend of his father, Thorkel Krafla, passing on his way to the Althing at Thingvellir, took him along to see what he was made of. From one of the camps their horses strayed. Grettir finally found his horse, but not his provision-bag, which had fallen from the saddle. Presently he saw another man, also hunting for a provision-bag. The rest of the party had moved on. Just then the stranger, Skeggi, found a bag; a dispute ensued, for Grettir thought the bag was his. During the quarrel, Skeggi struck at Grettir with an ax, which the boy deftly caught, and, wrenching it from his opponent's grasp, cleft his skull with it. Then he went on with the bag, which he was sure was his own. When he was asked what had become of Skeggi, he replied by singing a stanza of his own composing after the fashion of the time—a periphrasis of what had happened. He was understood, and some men went back to the place where Skeggi was lying dead; but Grettir continued the journey, well pleased with his skill, to lay the matter before the Lawman at the Althing. The rule was for the slayer to appear by proxy and offer blood-money to the nearest of kin. If this form of settlement was refused, they had the alternative of pursuing the offender to the death. Thorkel appeared for Grettir, with the result that Skeggi's relatives were satisfied with the money offered, so Grettir was free from hindrance by them; but the Lawman decided that Grettir must be outlawed and leave Iceland for three winters. Should he set foot there within that period his life was forfeit. Thus began the long outlawry of Grettir, and he departed for Norway.

His father refused to give him weapons, fearing he might put them to bad use; but his mother went with him a distance down the valley and, unobserved, presented him with a good sword she had carried under her cloak—a sword that had belonged to his grandfather. On the voyage Grettir was unruly, as usual, and made himself disliked. They lost their bearings and one night ran on the rocks of the Norwegian coast. With great difficulty all got ashore, with their goods, on a sandy island where lived a wealthy farmer named Thorfin. This man helped the castaways on their road, but Grettir, though not much wanted, remained with him. About Yule-time, Thorfin,

with all but his wife, his daughter, who was ill, and some serving-men, departed for a Yule-feast at a distance. Grettir was not desired for any merrymaking, and he too was left at the farm. On Christmas Day, toward evening, as he sat gazing disconsolately over the sea, he spied a suspicious-looking boat stealing toward the shore. Twelve armed men were in it. They broke open Thorfin's boat-house and placed their own boat in the place of his. Grettir sauntered down in his nonchalant way, and asked them who they might be. They replied: "Thorir-wi'-the-Paunch and Bad Ogmund." These two were brothers and the most desperate of all Red Rovers, burning, murdering, and laying waste everywhere they went.

"We have come to settle a little reckoning," they said. "Is Thorfin at home?"

"You are lucky," laughed Grettir. "He's away with all his fighting men for a couple of days. Follow me and I'll do what I can for you."

Everybody at the house hid in terror. Grettir dried the weapons, set them by the fire lest they should rust, exchanged their wet garments for dry ones from Thorfin's wardrobe, and waited on the pirates till they declared he should be one of them. Before a roaring fire he gave them the best and strongest ale in abundance, and presently they grew tipsy. Then Grettir proposed that before bedtime they should take a look into Thorfin's great log warehouse and see the fine treasures there. Across the yard and into the building they staggered, yelling their joy, and immediately began to quarrel over the stores. In the midst of this turmoil, Grettir extinguished the torch, stepped out, and slid the bolt on the heavy door. He then called for help from the house, but the eight serving-men remained hidden. Securing a spear and helmet, and girding on a sword, he rushed again to the storehouse, arriving just as the pirates had broken through into a lean-to and were smashing the door of that structure. They came out on a landing, armed with pieces of plank, and in the moonlight the two fierce brothers dashed down upon Grettir. Planting the butt of the spear on the ground, he received one upon it, at the same time badly wounding the other with the blade. The other men he cut right and left till those in the rear ran, believing a large number

against them; those in front speedily followed. Grettir pursued and killed all but two, who, the next day, were found frozen under a rock.

Another of Grettir's adventures at this place was the entrance into the tomb of Karr-the-Old, which was on a desolate promontory. Flames were said to dance over hidden treasure, and often he saw them dance over this lonely tomb. He persuaded a friend named Audun to go there with him, and was lowered into the black chamber after he had broken a hole at the top. There sat the long-dead Karr on a throne. Grettir helped himself to the treasures he saw and placed them in a vessel to be hauled up. Then he took from the dead man a short sword, and finally began to unhook a gold *torque* from the neck, when, amidst a glare of phosphorescent light, as his hands were undoing the clasp behind Karr's neck, the body stood up with a roar like a bull, and embraced Grettir in an iron grip. Then began a fearful wrestle. Grettir was well-nigh smothered by the long gray beard of the dead chief. The two staggered to and fro about the chamber, kicking bones about, stumbling against the walls, and bringing down masses of turf and planks from above. At last Karr's feet gave way, and Grettir fell over him. Then with the short-sword Grettir smote off Old Karr's head and laid it beside his thigh, the only way in which to prevent the evil spirits from making a dead man walk. Audun had run away, so Grettir climbed the rope with his treasures and made his way home.

In the spring he left Thorfin's farm and went along the coast, being made much of, as the story of his defeat of the rovers had spread.

The next winter he passed with another farmer called Thorgils, a very pleasant man. Among the visitors was one Biorn, with whom Grettir was soon at odds. While the whole party one day were engaged in an unsuccessful attempt to kill a troublesome bear, this man threw Grettir's fur coat into the lair. Grettir said nothing, but on the way home he stopped, pretending to repair his shoe, and as soon as the others had gone, he went back to fight the bear alone. Creeping up the narrow path, the animal came fiercely down to destroy him. The battle was desperate, till finally both rolled off the ledge.

Grettir landed on top, and as the fall had broken the bear's back, he took one paw and carried it to the house, where all rejoiced at his triumph except Biorn. He sneered, and Grettir would have fought him had it been permissible on his friend's estate. Later, he met him at a seaport and killed him. Earl Sweyn, who had dominion here, named a sum which should be paid to Biorn's brother, but the latter refused it and lay in wait for Grettir, giving him a bad wound in the back. The brother was killed also, as well as some of his men. The Earl wished to banish Grettir for this, but he remained over the third winter, and in the spring, his outlawry being ended, he returned to Iceland.

Horse-fights were the sport of the time, and in one of these Grettir was imposed upon and resented it. A feud resulted between Grettir and Kormack, the owner of the opposing horse. Not long after that, the two young men met on the plain, and a fight followed, which was stopped by the arrival of a man named Oxmain. The feud was dropped, and all would have been well had not a brother of Oxmain's, nicknamed "Slowcoach," sneered at it.

Grettir now heard of a haunted valley, and he went to stay with the frightened farmer that lived there, named Thorhall, to see what might happen. It was said that the corpse of a former shepherd, named Glam, haunted the place. Grettir wished to meet it, though it was reported to be a fierce wraith, and had killed the shepherd who was employed in his stead. Nothing happened to Grettir himself the first night of his stay at Thorhall's, but his horse's neck was broken by some mysterious force. The next night Thorhall locked himself within his bed, much frightened. Iceland beds were like portable closets. Grettir lay by the fire wrapped in a fur cloak, which he pulled over his head. Suddenly he heard something that shook all the sleep out of him. A heavy tread crunched the snow around the house. Then a crash overhead told that the visitor was on the roof. Grettir, peeping from his cloak, saw the monster's eyes glaring down the smoke-hole. Sounds of wreckage were heard outside, and then the door yielded. It was Glam. He prowled around, and finally pulled at the bundle by the fire. Grettir grappled with him; he drove his powerful head into

Glam's breast, then tried to bend him backward and break his spine. Then followed a fearful struggle for mastery, Glam trying to drag Grettir outside where he could easily kill him. Grettir clung to the door-posts, but presently down crashed the gable-trees, ripping beams and rafters from their places. Glam fell on his back and Grettir on top of him, weak but still able to hold Glam down. Then Glam said:

"You have done ill, matching yourself with me; now know that never shall you be stronger than you are to-day, and that to your dying day, whenever you are in the dark, you will see my eyes staring at you, so that for very horror you will not dare to be alone." At this moment Grettir saw his short-sword in the snow, where it had fallen—the same he had taken from Karr-the-Old—and with it he severed Glam's head and laid it beside his thigh. On a pile of fagots the body was burned.

In the spring of 1015, Grettir decided to go to Norway. It chanced that Slowcoach, the brother of Oxmain, was a passenger on the same ship. His friends tried to dissuade him from going when it was learned that Grettir was on the boat. But Slowcoach defied Grettir and made insulting remarks about his father and about Grettir himself. Grettir had not forgotten the ending of the battle over the horse-fight, and was ready for a quarrel. The result was an immediate encounter, and Grettir's skilful sword did its work. The ship carried him to Norway, and, landing in a cove one night without fire, Grettir swam to a light on the other side, which proved to be from an inn where two sons of an Iceland chieftain, Thorir of Garth, were holding revelry. Grettir's clothing had frozen on him and he was a wild-looking object as he scraped embers from the inn fire into an iron pot he had brought. The company attacked him, and he defended himself with a heavy firebrand. The burning coals were scattered through the straw on the floor, and amidst the flames and smoke Grettir made his escape.

He swam back across the arm of the sea, carrying the burning embers in the iron pot. In the morning the skipper recognized the locality, and Grettir was accused of maliciously destroying the inn and the sons of the distinguished Thorir with it. To preserve themselves from a similar charge, the company expelled Grettir, who made his way on foot to Drontheim.

There he laid the matter before the King and was sentenced to go through the ordeal of fire. He was fed on bread and water for a week and taught to pray that if he were innocent God should reveal it by enabling him to pass unscathed through this trial. A great procession, with the King at the head, led him to the test, and all went smoothly till Grettir resented the insults of a bystander by tossing him into the air. This caused a general disturbance; and it was reported that the Icelander was fighting the whole town. By this time the hot irons had cooled, and the King gave up the ordeal and passed a sentence of banishment instead. As no ship could be taken to Iceland till spring, Grettir was tolerated until that time. He went to stay with a farmer called Einar, in a lonely place exposed to the raids of bandits who wore bearskins with the heads pulled over their faces and were called Bearsarks. Their custom was to pretend mad frenzy when making their demands. Snoekoll, one of the worst of these, came to Einar's on a huge black horse, with several followers on foot. Snoekoll threatened to go into a paroxysm.

"Let us see how you look in a fit," calmly said Grettir, whereat Snoekoll bellowed, roared, rolled his eyes, blew foam from his lips, and bit hard on his iron shield. At a moment when he was clenching the shield furiously between his teeth, Grettir gave it a sudden kick upward, and the leverage broke the Bearsark's jaw. Quickly pulling him from his horse, Grettir killed him with his own sword, while the followers ran away.

Einar had a beautiful daughter, of whom Grettir was much enamored, but as he knew a man of his reputation would have no chance in that direction, he departed to live for a time with a half-brother, Thorstein Dromund, a man of wealth. Dromund, on parting, swore to avenge Grettir if anyone should kill him, a promise which he fulfilled.

Meanwhile more ill luck was befalling Grettir in Iceland. Oxmain, whose brother, Slowcoach, Grettir had killed, went to Biarg and killed Atli, Grettir's brother; and Thorir of Garth, hearing of the burning of his two sons at the inn fire, went to the Althing and charged Grettir with their murder. The Lawman declined to pass judgment on this one-sided evidence; but the power of Thorir's influence compelled the proclaiming of

Grettir an outlaw throughout the whole of Iceland, and a price was put on the absent man's head.

So when Grettir at last returned to his native shores he was met with thrice bad news. His father had died; his brother was killed, and he was again declared an outlaw. A few days he remained at home with his mother and his remaining brother, young Illugi; then he went to Oxmain's farm and had a battle with him and his son, killing both in the open field. In this fight he lost a silver-inlaid spear-head, which never was found till the year 1250. He was now an outlaw indeed, for the kinsmen of Oxmain and Thorir, with all their power, were continually in pursuit of him. His relatives laid the whole matter before the Althing. Snorri, a new judge, suggested that a fine imposed should be dropped; that the outlawry should be set aside, and that the slaying of Thorbiorn Oxmain should be balanced by the slaying of Atli, Grettir's brother. This arrangement would have prevailed had it not been for the implacable Thorir of Garth. He even increased the price set on Grettir's head to three marks of silver, and to this Thorod, the kinsman of Oxmain, added three more.

Grettir was now hunted like a dog, and never could remain long in one place, unless it was out in the desert of lava and *jokulls*, where he found it difficult to secure provisions. In winter he could stay with some friendly farmer in an out-of-the-way place, but in summer he must be continually moving. Once he took up his quarters for the winter at a place called Eagle Lake Heath, a hard day's journey from his home, and a bleak locality. Other outlaws wished to join him here, and Grettir's enemies, who were all afraid of him, arranged with one called Grim to pretend friendliness and find an opportunity to kill him. But Grettir was on his guard and gave no chance. Another outlaw, named Redbeard, was hired to do the same thing. Grettir would have remained alone, but Glam's words haunted him, and he was nervous about being without some companion and feared the dark. Redbeard had no chance the first winter, but during the second he formed a plan that nearly succeeded; but Grettir triumphed over him and killed him. A large body of armed men then tried to capture Grettir, but he found a place of vantage and defeated them. He would

not have succeeded in this had not a friend of his, unknown to Grettir, beaten off the attacking party from his rear. This friend was Hallmund, who lived in a cave some distance away, and Grettir went with him to his home. It had now come to such a pass that even those who favored Grettir's cause were afraid to shelter him or give him food.

Grettir consequently became a nuisance in every neighborhood, for he was obliged to steal sheep and forage on the farms. At one time three separate bodies of armed men closed in on him, but, with the help of two friends, who defended his back, on a point of rocks jutting into a river, Grettir defeated them by his great strength and his skill in swordsmanship.

After this, Grettir, with his brother Illugi and a servant named Glaum, went to the island of Drangey, which lay five miles off the shore and was bounded by precipitous cliffs. A rope ladder led to its grassy summit. This ladder had been put there by farmers who had right to graze sheep on the island. Eighty sheep were wandering there when Grettir arrived. He drew up the ladder and prevented the farmers from recovering their stock, which meanwhile he used for subsistence. The exiles also had plenty of eggs and birds, but they lacked vegetables. There was also driftwood for fuel, and the island offered a comfortable refuge till Grettir's term of outlawry should expire. In the summer of 1031 his friends brought up the subject at the Althing. He had now been in outlawry nineteen years, and the judge ruled that no man could be outlawed more than twenty years. Grettir, then, had one year more of exile to pass. One of the farmers, named Hook, who had rights on Drangey, was a brutal fellow, and he determined to destroy Grettir. He caused his foster-mother, who was a witch, to cast a spell upon him from a boat. She cut some runes on a log of driftwood, which later was washed on the shore of Drangey. Grettir, in attempting to chop this log, cut his leg severely. Blood-poison set in; Grettir lay in fever and distress; and one stormy night Hook and a band of men gained the summit and attacked the hut. Grettir and Illugi fought desperately, but they were overpowered, Grettir, indeed, being in his death-throes when he struck his last blow. They killed Illugi too, as he refused to swear a truce, and they killed Glaum.

Hook cut off Grettir's head and rode to the Biarg home, where he flung it at the feet of Grettir's mother.

The Althing decreed that as Hook had cut off the head of a man who was already dead, and as he had brought about that death by the help of witchcraft, he should receive nothing of the money reward and should be outlawed from Iceland. So he went to Constantinople, where he enlisted in the Emperor's guard. Dromund, Grettir's half-brother, secretly followed him and enlisted in the same guard. Dromund did not know which was the murderer of Grettir till one day Hook boasted of having killed a great outlaw with a peculiar sword he had: the short-sword which Grettir had taken from Karr-the-Old.

"And his name?" asked Dromund.

"His name was Grettir the Strong," Hook replied. There was a pause, and in that pause the sword was handed to Dromund to look at.

"Then is Grettir avenged!" cried Dromund, and whirled it in the air. So great was the stroke he dealt that it smote through Hook's skull to his teeth, and he fell without a word, dead.

AMELIA EDITH BARR

(England, 1831)

A BOW OF ORANGE RIBBON: A ROMANCE OF NEW YORK (1886)

This book established Mrs. Barr's popularity and has remained the greatest favorite among her many novels. It was the second book she wrote, being preceded by *Jan Vedder's Wife*, also a story of New York under the Dutch.

LATE one afternoon of May, 1765, in the picturesque little city of New York, a group of grave-looking men were separating at the steps of the City Hall—members of His Majesty's Council for the Province of New York. One of them was Joris Van Heemskirk. He was massively built, and richly dressed in a style that proclaimed him a Hollander. He was proud of his race as any English duke of his royal line, and while he associated with the ruling English in civic and commercial affairs, he scorned those of his Dutch neighbors who mingled with them socially. On arriving at his handsome dwelling in the northwestern outskirts of the city, with its great garden sloping down to the river-side, the Councilor sat down to refresh himself with his pipe.

Madam Lysbet Van Heemskirk, his wise little wife, busy in household matters, moved steadily about, and, in her trig Dutch costume, made a pleasant picture of domesticity.

Joanna, the plump elder daughter, was out; Bram, the broad-shouldered son, had not yet come home; and when the good man asked for Katherine, his lovely seventeen-year-old darling, the mother's brow clouded.

"Katherine troubles me," she said. "She is quiet, and thinks much, and when I ask of what she is thinking, she

answers, 'Nothing, mother.' But when a girl says, 'Nothing,' there is something—perhaps indeed *somebody*—on her mind."

But soon came the two daughters, who had been visiting Madam Semple, their next neighbor; and with them Elder Semple, a rich and godly Scotchman, with whose family the Van Heemskirks had kept up a friendship through four generations. The Elder stayed to supper; and after that, when the girls had retired, he opened his mind, formally proposing marriage between his son Neil and Katherine. This was received in friendly spirit, it being agreed that at the proper time Neil would be acceptable; but as yet, said the mother, Katherine was too young, and had not begun to think of such things. The Elder reminded them, however, that Colonel Gordon, of an English regiment, and his fine English wife, had been living at his house, and that among their visitors was Mistress Gordon's handsome nephew, Captain Richard Hyde; adding that, as Katherine had been there often to learn the crewel-stitch from Mrs. Gordon, both he and his son Neil had noticed that the young officer had shown much interest in her. This startled Joris and his wife, who were alarmed by the danger—especially from one of the hated English race. They decided that Katherine should go no more to the Semples', and the Elder departed. Even so, Madam Van Heemskirk was not altogether happy. Their eldest two daughters had married substantial Dutch citizens of Albany, and Joanna was betrothed to a successful and self-satisfied sea-trader, Captain Batavius De Vries; but, for the charming Katherine, Lysbet had dreamed of some higher advancement. Indeed, that very day had been dangerously fascinating for the girl. Mrs. Gordon greatly fancied her, and seeing that her nephew did so too, knowing that the gay Captain's gambling debts were pressing, and thinking that the wealthy Councilor would handsomely portion his daughter, she skilfully favored his suit. She had that morning flattered the maiden with tales of Richard's admiration; and, when he came in and invited Katherine to sail with him, she laughed away the girl's doubts of propriety and sent them off together. But Captain Hyde had no idea of going on the river; they stopped on the lower steps of the landing, and there he enchanted the fair girl with his love-story,

and she resigned her heart to him. When they returned, Hyde spoke of the pleasure of their excursion, and Madam Semple and Joanna accepted it; but Neil Semple suspected something, and scented danger. A talk with his father led to the Elder's evening visit to the Van Heemskirks.

Katherine sadly obeyed her father's injunction to go no more to Madam Semple's, but decided to send some apology to Mrs. Gordon, and wrote as follows:

"To Mistress Colonel Gordon:

"*Honored Madam:* My father forbids that I come to see you. He thinks you should upon my mother call. That you will judge me to be rude and ungrateful I fear very much. But that is not true. I am unhappy, indeed. I think all the day of you.

"Your obedient servant,

"Katherine Van Heemskirk."

Mrs. Gordon answered this by visiting the Van Heemskirks the next morning, where she charmed the appreciative Lysbet with her gracious manners. Before leaving, she managed to see Katherine alone, and, depicting Richard's distress at not seeing her, coaxed her to send him a love-token. So Katherine gave her a little bow of orange ribbon that she had worn on St. Nicholas's Day, and agreed to walk in the garden beside the river at three o'clock, so that Richard might see her from his boat. She was there, but with Joanna; and, while the latter stooped to pick flowers, a boat appeared, and an officer arose in the stern, and threw back his cloak, showing a bow of orange ribbon upon his breast. And joy throbbed in the maiden's heart.

Neil Semple was a promising young lawyer, of grave deportment and shrewd mind. Although reared with Katherine from her childhood, and always regarding her as his future wife, he never had spoken of love. But the attentions of the Gordons and young Hyde had aroused his jealousy, which now was firing his complacent affection to real passion. But, even since the Elder's talk, nothing had been said to Katherine about Neil; the father had shrunk from so positive an act, while the mother had no enthusiasm for the commonplace match. Thus all circumstances conspired to leave Katherine free to respond to her handsome and gallant lover.

A few days later, the arrival of Captain Batavius De Vries with his rich cargo, and rare gifts for Joanna, occasioned an evening gathering at the Van Heemskirk house to welcome the future son-in-law. Neil, with his dark beauty, made a fine foil to Katherine's delicate grace when they danced the minuet; but after the arrival of Mrs. Gordon and Hyde the young officer engrossed Katherine, to her delight, and Neil went home, glooming. The very next day Hyde went manfully to see Van Heemskirk in his great warehouse. At the mention of Katherine, the Councilor stood up; his kindly face grew stern, and he forbade the Captain even to speak her name. He scorned Hyde's frank story of his own family and his possible inheritance of its earldom, told him that he regarded neither king nor kaiser superior to his own Dutch ancestry, and bade him seek a wife among his own women. "My daughter," he added, "is to another man promised."

"Look you, Councilor," said Hyde, "that would be monstrous. Your daughter loves me," and he further quietly asserted that he would marry the girl if he could compass it.

"Not one guilder," cried Joris, "will I give my daughter if—"

"To the devil with your guilders! Dirty money made in dirty traffic!" shouted Hyde; and, pale with rage, he went out.

The proposal, and Hyde's assertion that Katherine loved him, smote Joris with a shock. He saw trouble for the house of his friend Semple, and sought him for conference. The Elder heard him quietly, and told him that it was mostly his own fault for not being more decided with the girl, who, young as Van Heemskirk thought her, had been old enough to fool one of the councilors of the colony. So Joris returned to his house and, with the mother, told Katherine of the arrangements for her marriage with Neil, and the new house and all—but with the dictum that she should see Hyde no more until after the wedding. He reluctantly consented, on the mother's plea, that she might see him once more, to tell him of the facts and to bid him farewell; and Katherine sped away to the riverside, where Richard's boat was soon to come.

Meantime, the Elder had told Neil of Hyde's proposal and seeming success with the girl, and, as hate flashed up in the

young man's face, he cautioned him against fighting, but advised him to be more loverlike if he would win his wife. Neil was no coward, but a duel might have untoward effects upon his career, and he walked about the city debating with himself, when a sudden determination to go to Katherine took him down a river-path. As he descended he met Hyde coming up from his interview with Katherine. Looks of mutual defiance broke into words:

"At your service, sir," cried Neil.

"Mr. Semple, at your service," replied Hyde, and throwing back his coat he added, "As for the cause, Mr. Semple, here it is," showing the bow of orange ribbon.

"I will dye it crimson in your blood," shouted Neil.

"In the meantime, I have the felicity of wearing it," answered Hyde, and, with an offensively deep salute, he passed on.

Neil pursued his way to the house, and found Katherine tearful after her parting with Richard; but, intent on his own ideas, he poured out vows of love and devotion. Katherine met him kindly, but declared that she should never marry; and, when he persisted, turned from him with dignity. He then spoke of the bow of orange ribbon, and begged, and finally demanded, that she should give him one also. When at last she vehemently denied him, he retorted:

"Well, then, I will cut *my* bow from Hyde's breast, though I cut his heart out with it," and abruptly left her.

The seconds of the young men arranged the meeting for sunset on the Kalehook Hill. Neil made his will and settled his affairs. Hyde did what he could to arrange his debts, and visited a venerable Jew, named Cohen, to whom he owed a hundred guineas, leaving with him a ring, which was accepted in settlement. But the Jew's daughter, Miriam, learning from her father of the duel, sent word to Van Heemskirk, through his son Bram, who had answered her summons for his father, and who speedily told both the Councilor and the Elder.

The encounter was bitter. Hyde had no special desire to fight, but, knowing that Semple had just cause of anger, was willing enough. Some bloody thrusts from Semple, however, roused him, while the sight of the bow of ribbon on Hyde's breast filled Neil with fury. At last, bleeding from many

wounds, both lost their swords in the same entanglement, and before they could recover Van Heemskirk and Elder Semple rushed between them, while they fell fainting to the ground. One of Semple's friends tried to take the blood-stained love-knot for him, but Van Heemskirk thrust him away.

"To touch it would be the vilest theft," he cried. "His own it is. With his life he has bought it."

News of the duel spread rapidly, and, strangely enough, censure of the innocent girl seemed to be the verdict of the Dutch community, so that even after it was decided that both the grievously wounded men would live, Katherine felt as if God, fate, and the world had united against her. In three months Neil was about again, his sword-arm in a sling, but he was able to resume his duties. He was, however, further than ever from Katherine, who treated him kindly, but ignored or repelled every attempt at sentiment. Her brother Bram went often to old Cohen, who had saved Hyde's life when the English surgeons said he must die, and from the Jew, or from the lovely Miriam, brought her news of Richard's progress. Bram soon saw life a heavenly thing in Miriam's eyes; but their dream was short-lived, for the Jew married his daughter to one of their own race.

One day Katherine ventured out to buy some things for her mother, and, passing along Pearl Street, heard her name called. A door flew open, and Mrs. Gordon rushed down the steps, embraced her, and constrained her to enter. Once in, despite the parental injunction, Mrs. Gordon persuaded Katherine to drive with her to see Dick at The King's Arms. They found him, still very weak, but delighted to receive them. When it was time to go, Hyde begged Katherine to come again, saying:

"Upon my honor, I promise to ask Katherine Van Heemskirk only this once."

She promised, for two days from that time, on the appointed day, Katherine went again to Mrs. Gordon, who had just received some dainty gowns from Paris, and persuaded her to put on one, an exquisite light-blue satin, sprigged with silver, and a dark-blue manteau trimmed with fur—"just to please Dick." They found a soldierly man in full uniform sitting beside the couch of the invalid, who himself was attired in a

chamber-gown of maroon satin, with deep ruffles at wrists and bosom.

"Ah, if you were only my wife, Katherine!" cried Richard.

"Only *your* wife will I be," responded the blushing girl.

"*Now*, Katherine? This minute, darling? I promised not to ask Katherine Van Heemskirk here again, but *Katherine Hyde* would have a right to come."

And, with trembling hesitation, in great pity for the man she loved, Katherine consented. The Governor's chaplain was in attendance, Colonel Gordon, Mrs. Gordon, and Captain Earle were witnesses, and the ceremony was performed, Katherine kneeling by Richard's side.

Neil still persisted in coming to see Katherine, despite her discouraging attitude. The secret marriage had been contracted in October, and since then she had not seen Richard, although she had exchanged letters with him; and now St. Nicholas's Day was at hand, appointed for the wedding of Batavius and Joanna. It was a splendid affair, and when the afternoon dinner had given place to the evening's entertainment, and dancing began, Neil solicited Katherine. But she refused, saying she could not take his blood-stained hand, and left him, helpless and distraught. After this he came no more to see her, though there was no break between the families.

Spring came, and one fine May morning Madam Semple excitedly entered the Van Heemskirk dwelling with the startling news that the British ship *Dauntless* had sailed for the West Indies with Captain Earle and his contingent, "and who wi' him, guess you, but Captain Hyde!" Katherine was heart-struck. Her father and Bram confirmed the news, and they felt tender pity for the little maid. But, when she was sitting with her sympathetic mother at household work that afternoon, Mrs. Gordon rustled in, took her for a drive, and told her that, while Richard had gone, he was coming back at eight o'clock that evening to see her, down by the garden river-steps. Whether Lysbet suspected Katherine's desire to get out that evening or not, was uncertain; but, after supper, when the father and Bram had gone to a meeting, she sent Katherine to Joanna's on an errand. Katherine blushed scarlet, and lingered about till her mother tied on her hood and bade her go. At the river-

steps, a boat soon shot out of the shadows to her feet, and Richard leaped ashore. She flew to his arms, and then, holding her fast, Richard told her he had come to take her, so that they should never be separated more. Her mental struggle was severe, but it had to be short, for Richard could wait but five minutes, and, recalling her agony when she thought he had gone without her, Katherine yielded; they entered the boat, and were gone to join the *Dauntless* in the lower bay.

At home, they thought Katherine had stayed with Joanna overnight; but in the morning came a note to Joris at his store, brought by a fisherman:

"My Father and Mother: I have gone with my husband. I married Richard when he was ill, and to-night he came for me. When I left home I knew not I was to go. Only five minutes I had. In God's name, this is the truth. Always, at the end of the world, I shall love you. Forgive me, forgive me, *myn fader, myn moeder.* Your child,

"Katherine Hyde."

Joris hastened to Mrs. Gordon, who told him all about the wedding; but he was crushed. At home, the mother kissed the letter and said, "It was a great strait, Joris"; and then heartened up her man to uphold his daughter's honor and proclaim that she had gone with her husband. Of course, Batavius and Joanna, the neighbors, the town at large, took the worst possible view; but the doubters were silenced by the next issue of the *New York Gazette*, containing an advertisement of the marriage: "October 19, 1765, by the Rev. Mr. Somers, Chaplain to his Excellency the Governor, Richard Drake Hyde, of Hyde Manor, Norfolk, son of the late Richard Drake Hyde and brother of William Drake Hyde, Earl of Dorset and Hyde, to Katherine Van Heemskirk, the youngest daughter of Joris and Lysbet Van Heemskirk, of the city and province of New York," with the names of the aristocratic witnesses in full.

And now it was May again—a fair English May. In Hyde Manor House, Richard, in full uniform, his twelve months' leave expired, was hastily breakfasting with his wife before returning to duty. But neither was sorrowful, for he had been exchanged into a court regiment and was going only to London. Hyde Manor House was not beautiful, but it was old and inter-

esting, and Katherine, with Dutch orderliness and thrift, had gradually cleansed and adorned the halls and rooms, and brought to bloom the neglected garden, while Richard, spurred by this, had cared well for his stables, his fields, and his woods; and the birth of a son increased his sense of responsibility. Katherine had kept up a loving correspondence with her mother, but when the little son came—whom Richard had cordially consented to name George, the English form of Joris—she had written full-heartedly to her father. He was immensely pleased, and sent Katherine as her portion five thousand pounds, and to the little Joris the famous old silver Middleburg cup, their choicest family heirloom. Richard, gratified that the money had been entrusted to his honor, not settled on his wife, arranged to use only the interest. He knew, too, that rumor would swell the five thousand pounds to fifty thousand—a satisfactory answer to the jibes of his fashionable friends in London.

Richard's first visit in town was to his maternal grandmother, the Dowager Lady Capel—a wealthy, ill-tempered old woman, who, nevertheless, liked her gay grandson and had twice paid his gambling debts. She rallied him about his Dutch wife, commended her fifty thousand pounds of fortune, laughed at his constancy for a whole year, and claimed his social service for herself and his cousin, Lady Arabella Suffolk—a fashionable coquette with an indulgent old husband. In this lady's fascinations she foresaw mischief and amusement.

In the next six months Lady Capel was satisfied. Society idolized Captain Hyde, and he, while flirting with a dozen other women, was pretty constantly at Lady Arabella's side. His marriage was a topic of doubt and dispute; but no one dared ask him about it. He loved his wife tenderly, but was susceptible to the beauty and attractiveness of other women, and spent his days and nights in a perpetual round of social folly. His income was small, and his debts began to press. He must borrow. One Sunday afternoon a sweet letter from Katherine touched his better nature, and he determined to go to her. Obtaining a two weeks' leave of absence, he went to Lady Capel's brilliant mansion, as Sunday evening was her great card-night, hoping to find her in good humor. But she had

been losing, and it was only after much scolding that she gave her grandson the hundred guineas he sought. Next morning he mounted his horse and made his way to Norfolk. Here he spent two happy weeks with his wife and son, and then was off to London once more.

It was May again, but in 1774. The years had passed without much variation in the lives of Hyde and his wife; but the troubles between England and the Colonies were culminating, and party feeling ran high, even in the army, for many officers—Hyde among them—angrily opposed the policy of the Government. At Hyde's club one evening an altercation arose, in which he took part so vigorously that a certain Lord Paget called him a traitor, and, being himself a suitor for the hand of Lady Suffolk, now a widow, proceeded further to question Hyde sarcastically about his American wife. Hyde blazed with rage, when a messenger summoned him to his grandmother, who had been death-stricken while at whist. She told him she had left him eight thousand pounds, and, with a cynical smile on her old face, passed away.

On the same afternoon a London pedler came to Hyde Manor. Ladies in the country purchased most of their toilet accessories from these packmen, and Katherine went to inspect his wares. She had laid out and paid for several things, when the pedler showed a beautiful scarf which he had bought, he said, for Lady Suffolk, "but Lord Suffolk died sudden, and my lady had to wear black"; and then he continued, detailing the London gossip about Lady Arabella and her lover, a fine cavalry officer, adding, "Though there's them that do say the Captain has a comely wife hid up in the country." Katherine turned on him with quiet, concentrated anger. She charged him with being a bad man, sent by a bad woman to lie about her husband. She returned his goods, demanded her money, and had him driven from the house and grounds.

Katherine had at one time been pained by frequent talk of Richard's about Lady Arabella, but he had laughed away her anxieties, and she had taken pride in putting his word above all suspicion. Yet this London gossip was frightful: her husband the reputed lover of another woman, her own ex-

istence doubted or denied; and doubts and fears assailed her. But she remembered Richard's tenderness for her and little Joris, and calmed herself, even though his usual letter came not for several days. When it came, it explained his silence by Lady Capel's death and funeral, and announced his speedy home-coming. Katherine spent the next few days in joyful preparations, until a strange officer brought her a letter, which said:

"It is midnight, beloved Katherine, and in six hours I may be dead. Lord Paget spoke to me of my cousin in such terms as left but one way out of the affront. I pray you, if you can, to pardon me. The world will condemn me; my own actions will condemn me; and yet, I vow that you, and you only, have ever had my love. Kate, my Kate, forgive me. If this comes to you by strange hands, I shall be dead or dying. My will and papers of importance are in the drawer marked "B" in my escritoire. Kiss my son for me, and take my last hope and thought."

Oh, the shame! Oh, the sorrow! Was the pedler's talk true, then? The officer bringing the note would escort her to Richard, or take to him his will for a codicil concerning Lady Capel's legacy. She went to his writing-desk, and in drawer "B" found divers personal treasures of Richard's—some that touched her nearly. Among them was a small parcel, and on the outside these lines in Richard's hand:

"O, my love, my love! This thy gift I hold
More than fame or treasure, more than life or gold."

At last, the test! If it contained aught of Lady Suffolk, she would send him his will and leave him to himself. Within was another wrapper—the first letter she had signed "Katherine Hyde"; and, folded within that, was her own love-token, the blood-stained bow of orange ribbon. She kissed it with triumphant love, and cried, "Oh, Richard, my lover, my husband! Now will I hasten to thee!"

In August, while Richard was convalescing at home, one day his tall, handsome elder brother, Earl William, for years a world-wanderer, arrived. He was enthusiastic over the beautiful condition of Hyde Manor, and when Richard said it was his wife's work, the Earl told him that he himself was married, and had two sons. The disinherited Richard responded cor-

dially, when the Earl said: "Why not go to America? I will take Hyde Manor at its highest price, and add fifty thousand pounds indemnity for your loss of the succession. You may buy land enough for a duchy over there. If there is war, you will have your chance with the Colonists you approve of, and if they win, you will be a person of consideration and found a new line of the old family."

After consulting Katherine, Richard accepted his brother's offer, and went with his wife and son and fortune to throw in his lot with the Americans. With Van Heemskirk and Bram he joined the army, his tasseled sword-knot as he rode off being replaced by a brown and faded bow of orange ribbon.

A hundred years later, the family residing in a great stone mansion on the Hudson told much of the builder of the house, a noted cavalry officer of the Revolution, and his beautiful wife, whose portraits adorned the main hall. And they proudly showed "the household talisman," carefully kept in a box of carved sandalwood—a faded bit of satin that had been a love-token: a St. Nicholas bow of orange ribbon.

JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE

(Scotland, 1860)

A WINDOW IN THRUMS (1889)

Much of this little story is acknowledged by the author to be autobiographical. Jess is drawn from Mr. Barrie's own mother, who was afterward more carefully pictured in his novel entitled *Margaret Ogilvy;* while Leeby is a portrait of his sister. The author's own character has much in common with Jamie; and the little village of Thrums finds its original in Kirriemuir, where Mr. Barrie was born and reared.

AT the top of the brae still stands a one-story house whose whitewashed walls look yellow when snow comes. Into this humble abode I would take anyone who cares to accompany me. On the left of the doorway is the "room." The passageway is narrow. There is a square hole between the rafters, and a ladder leading up to it. You may climb and look into the attic, as Jess liked to hear me call my tiny garret room. I have kept the kitchen for the last, and the window where Jess sat in her chair, and looked down the brae. For more than twenty years she had not been able to go so far as the door. With her husband, Hendry, or their only daughter, Leeby, to lean upon, and her hand clutching her staff, she took twice a day, when she was strong, the journey between her bed and the window where stood her chair. She seldom complained. All the sewing of the house was done by her, and she often prepared her baking on a table pushed close to the window.

I stayed only once during the whole of my holidays at the house on the brae, but I knew its inmates for many years, including Jamie, the son, who was a barber in London.

Jess's rarest possession was a christening robe, that even people at a distance came to borrow.

From Jess's window a great deal could be seen that went on in Thrums, and often she sent Leeby up into the attic to see whether smoke was coming out of the chimney of the spare bedroom at the manse, in order to learn whether a guest was expected. When anyone passed the window, Jess and Leeby took intense interest in them, and discussed the probability of their going here or there for this or that purpose. When Lawyer Ogilvy's servant passed with two jugs in her hand, Leeby was sure that she was going for cream as well as for milk, and that there was company at the lawyer's house.

One night Jess was taken with diphtheria, and she thought she was going to die. Leeby ran for the doctor, but he was away in the hills and did not come till dawn.

"This is a fearsome nicht," Hendry said. He sat down by the kitchen fire with his Bible on his knees. But Jess recovered.

Hendry often crossed over to the farm of T'nowhead and sat on the fence of the pigsty. Here a gathering that was almost a club held informal meetings. Tammas Haggart took the lead at these meetings, and he had a great reputation as a humorist.

"A humorist doesna tell whaur the humor comes in," he said. "A humorist would often no ken 'at he was ane, if it wasna by the wy he maks other fowk lauch. A body canna be expeckit baith to mak the joke an' to see't. Na, that would be doin' twa fowks' wark."

Twenty years had passed since Jess lost her boy Joey. He was run over and killed, and that was the tragedy of Jess's life. On the Sabbath-day Jess could not go to church, and it was then, I think, that she was with Joey most. He had meant to be a minister when he grew up, and told his mother his first sermon should be from the text, "Thou God seest me."

Jess's staff was old and black, and very short; nearly a foot having been cut from the original, of which to make a porridge "thieval," or stick with which to stir porridge. Joey had once hidden it when Jess was very ill, after he had heard her say that she was going very far away. He knew she could not walk without it, and thought that if he hid it she could not go away.

When I was with Hendry beaded cloaks were the fashion, and

Jess sighed as she looked at them. They were known in Thrums as "the Eleven and a Bits." Her only opportunity to handle garments was when she had friends to tea. Hendry was not quick at reading faces, but he saw that Jess wanted a cloak. He told her she could never wear it, and it would have to be kept in a drawer. She said she could take it out and look at it, and she would know it was there. And then he told her that no one else would know it.

"Would they no!" answered Jess. "It would be a' through the town afore nicht."

Hendry finally saved up money and bought her the cloth for a cloak, and gave her money for the beads and buttons.

Hendry, Leeby, and I were invited to drink tea at the manse with the minister and his bride, a very grand lady from Edinburgh. Leeby shaved her father and dressed him, and the family agreed that he looked unusually "perjink." The minister's wife said afterward that Leeby seemed very stupid and unobserving. But I heard Leeby describe to Jess everything in the parlor and in the bedroom where she went to take off her hat.

Jamie sent a registered letter containing money to his mother every month, and Jess was always greatly excited when the day came for it to arrive. There was much talk about it between her and Leeby, and Jess was up earlier than usual looking for the postman.

Jamie came once a year from London to visit his parents. On the previous year he had listened at the window for his mother's voice, and heard her say to Leeby that she was sure the teapot was running out. He then imitated an old man who went about selling firewood, and pushed open doors, crying:

"Ony rozetty roots?" and Leeby, going to shut the door, was surprised to see Jamie.

This time, as usual, Jess was very much excited, and Leeby was up at two in the morning, and eight hours before Jamie could possibly arrive Jess had a nightshirt warming for him.

Hendry, Leeby, and I walked out to meet Jamie, and when we saw him he and Leeby made signs that they recognized each other as brother and sister, but I was the only one with whom he shook hands. He even inquired for his mother in a tone

that was meant to deceive me into thinking he did not care how she was. He pretended to be calm, but I saw him take Leeby's hand afterward; and when we came in sight of the house he suddenly exclaimed:

"My mother!"

There was only one other memorable event of that day. Jamie took from his pocket a purse, and from the purse he took a neatly folded piece of paper, crumpled it into a ball, and flung it into Jess's lap. Leeby was in the secret.

"What is't?" asked Hendry.

"It's juist a bit paper Jamie flung at me," said Jess, and then she unfolded it.

"It's a five-pound note!" cried Hendry.

Leeby loved her brother Jamie dearly, and as a boy he was ashamed of it, for the boys teased him about it. He used to beg her not to show her affection for him before others.

"You're aye lookin' at me sae fondlike 'at I dinna ken what wy to turn. Am no tellin' ye no to care for me, but juist to keep it mair to yersel. Naebody would ken frae me 'at am fond o' ye."

As a boy, Jamie refused to go to kirk one Sabbath-day, and went off with some Tilliedrum lads in a cart. He returned at dark, defiant and miserable. Jess was terrified, Hendry prayed for him, and Leeby cried. After midnight Jamie rose and crept to Leeby's bedside, where she was shaking in agony. She slipped from her bed and both fell on their knees and prayed.

Jess liked to hear tales of sweethearting when Jamie was not the lad. But she had noticed him putting his hand in his pouch two or three times, as if to make sure that something was safe, so she got up early in the morning and got hold of his jacket and found a woman's glove in a bit of paper. She took it and hid it, and Jamie looked all over the house for it without saying a word. I never knew how Jamie came by the glove, nor whether it had originally belonged to her who made him forget the window at the top of the brae. But he found it after a time, and Jess got it again and hid it. She kept Jamie home from church on the Sabbath because he had a cold, and gave him the glove, and told him she could not bear to think

of his carrying that about so careful. And he laid it on the fire, so Leeby told me.

On the last night of Jamie's stay, Jess packed his box, tying his socks together with string. Hendry read his favorite chapter in the Bible, the fourteenth of John's Gospel, and then he prayed.

Leeby died at the end of the year I have been speaking of, and as I was snowed up in the schoolhouse at the time, I heard the news from Gavin Birse. She ran out in a sudden rain to bring in her washing, and took a terrible cold. She did not blame Jamie for not coming to her. He never got Hendry's letter with the news, and we knew that he was already in the hands of the woman who played the devil with his life. Before the spring came he had been lost to Jess. But Hendry said the Lord had given his house "so muckle that to pray for mair looks like not being thankful for what we have." And he prayed that Jess might go before him. But his prayer was not granted. He took a fever, and one night he wandered from the house to Elshioner's shop and worked at his loom, and there they found him dead. So it came about that for the last few months of her pilgrimage Jess was left alone.

Tammas Haggart was the first to come forward with offer of help. He filled Jess's pitcher and pan at the well every morning after filling his own, waiting his turn in the line of people who were sometimes at the well as early as three o'clock. Others helped, too. Jess said she would bake if anyone would buy, and many kindly folk came to her door for scones.

Jamie did not come to see his mother. We did not know of the London woman then, and Jess never knew of her. But Jess always had an eye on the brae, even when she was baking, Tibbie told me. Toward the end Jess felt sure that Jamie was dead.

The minister was with her when she died, and she asked him to read the sixteenth chapter of Genesis. When he read "Thou God seest me," she covered her face with her hands, and said:

"Joey's text, Joey's text! Oh, but I grudged ye sair, Joey!" And so she died.

Some time after this Jamie came back and went to the

house, but it was occupied by strange people. He asked about his family and was told that they were dead. He looked like a broken-hearted man. He asked about the furniture and his mother's staff.

"I've heard tell," the woman of the house told him, "'at the dominie up i' Glen Quharity took awa' the staff."

He spent that night on his mother's grave, and the next day came to the schoolhouse.

"I came oot," he said, "to see if ye would gie me her staff—no 'at I deserve it."

I brought out the staff and gave it to him. That evening he went up to the old house again and asked to be allowed to stay alone in the kitchen for a little while. Then he went away, and was never again seen in Thrums.

THE LITTLE MINISTER (1891)

This romance first appeared serially in *Good Words* in 1891, and was issued the same year in book form. It was dramatized by its author in 1897, and was received with great favor both in England and the United States. The scene of the tale is the market-town of Kirriemuir, Forfarshire, Scotland, about sixty miles north of Edinburgh, and designated as Thrums in the novel, much attention being paid to local coloring. The major part of the action of the novel covers a period of about ten months, but in the drama it is condensed within less than a fortnight.

AT twenty-one, Gavin Dishart was settled as minister of the Auld Licht parish in Thrums, a congregation composed mainly of weavers and their families. His mother, Margaret Dishart, was the widow of Adam Dishart, a fisherman of Harire, on the east coast, and at his death, when her son was but four years old, she removed to Glasgow, where the two remained until Gavin got his call to Thrums.

When Margaret was a young girl she was beloved by Gavin Ogilvy, later the dominie, or schoolmaster, of Glen Quharity, the supposed narrator of the story. A shy, timid man, he was soon distanced in his courtship by Dishart, for he says: "I went back to Aberdeen to write a poem about her, and while I was at it Adam married her."

Three months after the wedding Adam disappeared, most people supposing he had fallen over the cliff into the sea, and after two years Margaret married Ogilvy, who kept the school at Harvie. Nearly six years had elapsed when Adam came back, claimed Margaret as his wife, and pitched a coin in order to determine whose child the four-year-old boy should be, with the result that the lad fell to him. The dominie left home that same day and never saw Margaret again till seventeen years afterward, when she came to Thrums with her son, "the little minister," as he soon came to be known by reason of his short

stature. Margaret, however, knew nothing of the dominie's whereabouts after he left Harvie, and Ogilvy determined she never should see him in Thrums.

Once established in the manse with his mother and the serving-maid, Jean, "in eight days Gavin's figure was more familiar in Thrums than many that had grown bent in it. Though short of stature he cast a great shadow. He was so full of his duties, Jean said, that though he pulled the door to as he left the manse, he had passed the currant-bushes before it 'snecked.' He darted into courts, and invented ways into awkward houses. If you did not look up quickly he was 'round the corner."

A few months before Gavin's call to Thrums, the turbulent weavers of the town had made riotous demonstrations toward the manufacturers who had reduced the price of the web; and since then a watch had been kept by the weavers lest the sheriff should suddenly bring a force of soldiery to overawe the neighborhood. The blowing of a horn was to be a signal to Thrums that the soldiers had arrived and that the persons who had led the riot should make haste to flee. The possibility of the coming of the soldiers was the principal topic of discussion in Thrums save the settlement of the Auld Licht minister. Rob Dow, a drunken weaver, who came to kirk to annoy the minister, was unaccountably turned from his design and became one of Gavin's stanch supporters.

"My certie," he roared, "there's the shine frae Heaven on that little minister's face, and them as says there's no has me to fecht."

On one evening the minister visited Dow, who lived in the neighboring hamlet of New Zealand, and after praying with him and encouraging him in his resolution to keep sober, went on to visit a gipsy family called the Wild Lindsays. Not finding them, he was coming through a patch of woodland by moonlight when he saw a dancing figure before him that he fancied might be the embodiment of a maiden said to haunt the place. Presently she sang, and when she saw him she kissed her hand to him and fled. Under the spell of the moment, he pursued her, but in vain; and soon after he heard the signal horn. Hastening now to the public square of Thrums he saw

the figure of the gipsy again, this time as the leader of a dozen men with staves and pikes. In a few moments the square was filled with a turbulent throng, but "the Egyptian," as he had heard the gipsy girl called, was not visible. The minister endeavored to pacify the excited people, but the Egyptian, who now appeared, opposed his counsel, saying:

"This mair I ken, that the captain of the soldiers is confident he'll nab every one o' you that's wanted unless you do one thing."

"What is't?"

"If you a' run different ways you're lost, but if you keep thegither you'll be able to force a road into the country whaur you can scatter."

Intelligence now arrived that the soldiers were approaching from the north; and crying "Follow me!" the gipsy girl ran past the town house, with the crowd after her, and Gavin and Rob Dow were left alone in the square. Dow, bidden by the minister, escaped to the eastward, and Gavin hastened to the spot where the weavers were contending with the soldiers, commanded by Captain Halliwell. Stones and clods were cast at the soldiers; and, unnoticed by anyone, the Egyptian pressed a clod into Gavin's hand, whispering "Hit him!" Ere he knew what he was about, Gavin flung the clod and hit the captain on the head. He was horror-stricken at having done so, but when he turned to reproach the girl she had vanished.

It was not long ere the town house was full of prisoned weavers, and the sheriff and Captain Halliwell in its round room were discussing the evening's tumult. It presently developed that the Egyptian had cleverly induced the Thrums policeman, nicknamed "Weary-world," to blow the horn; and at that moment of revelation she was brought to the round room. There was much questioning on the part of sheriff and captain, but with small result; and presently the girl, adroitly upsetting the lamp, fled in the darkness, after locking the door behind her and thus imprisoning the sheriff and Halliwell.

At three o'clock in the morning, Gavin was returning home after trying to comfort the families whose heads had been captured, when he saw a file of soldiers in front of him, and also

perceived the gipsy in a long cloak approaching him. To his dismay she grasped his arm, and the soldiers, now recognizing him, inferred that his companion must be his wife. Quickly forestalling his remonstrance, she caught at the occasion thus offered, and, in a brief conversation with the sergeant commanding the soldiers, sustained the *rôle* of the minister's wife with entire success. To Gavin's subsequent reproaches she was alternately penitent and audacious, speaking freely in "broad Scots" and good English by turns. They parted, but she quickly returned, not being able to escape in the way she had hoped, and, distracted by contradictory emotions, he bade her hide in the manse garden.

On the Sunday after the riot Gavin was announcing his text to be in the eighth chapter of Ezra, when, to the amazement of his hearers, he came to a full stop, and then, showing much agitation, announced a text from Genesis, chapter three, verse six, and preached a long extemporaneous sermon against women. The pulpit Bible had been used by him in the summer-house of the manse garden, and as he was giving out the text from Ezra his eyes had rested on a scrap of writing on the sacred page:

"I will never tell who flung the clod at Captain Halliwell. But why did you fling it? I will never tell that you allowed me to be called Mrs. Dishart before witnesses. But is not this a Scotch marriage? Signed, Babbie the Egyptian."

Sanders Webster, the mole-catcher, whose bragging about maltreating policemen he never saw led to his being sent to jail for nine months, had a sister Nanny with whom he lived, and his imprisonment left her alone and starving. Early in January Gavin and Dr. McQueen visited her in order to reconcile her to the necessary removal to the poorhouse. The old woman was most unhappy at the thought of leaving her home, and while Gavin was praying with her the Egyptian entered Nanny's hut. Reproaching the two men for their proposed disposition of Nanny, the gipsy promised that she would herself pay the needful seven shillings weekly for the old woman's support till Sanders Webster should be let out of jail in the following August. She added that if the minister would meet her at a specified place on the Monday, she would hand him a five-pound

note for Nanny's behoof. The minister promised, and the doctor then drove away. Babbie now absented herself for a short time in order to get some tea and other necessaries for Nanny, and presently the three sat at tea in very sociable fashion; Gavin in love with Babbie, but as yet unaware of it, and now and again bewildered by her coquetry and rapidly changing moods.

Gavin made no mention of the Egyptian to his mother, but on Monday he met Babbie at the place appointed, the Kaims, where a much longer conversation ensued than was strictly required to accomplish the errand of each; but when Gavin stretched out his arms toward the mysterious girl, she ran away.

When the little minister had gone, a man came from behind a tree. It was Rob Dow, black with passion.

"It's the Egyptian!" he cried. "You limmer, wha are you that hae got haud o' the minister?"

The next meeting of Babbie and Gavin was near Nanny's hut, and this time Gavin was quite sure of the nature of the feeling he had for her. Meanwhile, Thrums folk were suspicious that their clergyman was in love with someone, but Rob Dow was the only person who knew of Babbie in this connection; and he feared that Gavin was being led astray. Dr. McQueen, however, surprised the secret from Rob, who would fain have called it all back. "I'm roaring drunk, doctor," he said, "and it wasna the minister I saw ava'; it was another man." At the first opportunity McQueen taxed Gavin with his interest in Babbie, whereupon the minister owned his love for the girl and his intention to marry her.

Late that night Gavin saw the flash of a lantern from his window, and going to the garden he found Babbie and kissed her as she sat in the summer-seat. He insisted on accompanying her back to old Nanny's in spite of the risk incurred should anyone meet them thus together; and they very shortly encountered the dominie, Mr. Ogilvy.

"It is natural," Gavin said, "that you, sir, should wonder why I am here with this woman at such an hour, and you may know me so little as to think ill of me for it. But I will explain nothing. You are not my judge. If you would do me harm, sir, you have it in your power."

The Egyptian must have seen that his suspicions hurt Mr. Ogilvy, for she said softly:

"You are the schoolmaster in Glen Quharity? Then you will perhaps save Mr. Dishart the trouble of coming farther by showing me the way to old Nanny Webster's."

"I have to pass the house," he answered.

At the house she looked abruptly into the dominie's face and said, "You love him, too."

On the morrow following, Babbie encountered, on a bleak hill near Thrums, Rob Dow's small son, Micah, weeping upon the wishing-stone there. Her questions elicited the information that he was wishing that the woman who had driven his father to drink was in hell. Her identity was unknown to him, and his father had said she should be burned for a witch. It was Mr. Dishart that she had power over, the boy added. "My father's michty fond o' him, and when the folk ken about the woman they'll stane the minister out o' Thrums."

Presently Micah said with conviction:

"You're the woman! You micht gang awa'. If ony shame comes to the minister his auld mither'll die. I'll gie you my rabbit if you'll gang awa'."

Babbie promised to go away and never return. Months elapsed, and Gavin at last gave up the search for her, convinced that he should never see her again.

On the 5th of August the old Lord Rintoul was to be married to a young bride at the Spittal, between Thrums and Glen Quharity, and on the day previous many persons were gathered to celebrate the occasion. Ogilvy from his window saw Lauchlan Campbell, a Highland piper, rushing down the highway playing his pipes and now and again shaking his fist in the direction of the Spittal, the immediate cause of his wrath being a command to play an air abhorrent to the Campbells. Some hours later, Babbie entered the dominie's house, crying out that Gavin had been killed by the angry piper. This, however, was a mistake. The piper, in an altercation with Dow, had been stunned by a blow from the other; Gavin, trying to intercept the blow, had fallen, and the report had gone out that he was killed. Ogilvy, having left Babbie at old Nanny's, went onward to Thrums and there learned the truth from Gavin

himself, who then accompanied the dominie back to Nanny's and so discovered Babbie.

Ogilvy left them together, and Babbie, confessing that she was to be married to Lord Rintoul, told him of her gipsy origin and how Rintoul had found and educated her in order some day to marry her. But it was Gavin who had taught her what love was, she said. A meeting at the kirk to pray for rain was to be held that same evening, but Gavin did not appear, and the congregation dispersed in mingled anger and sorrow to search for their minister. Lord Rintoul was already searching in his dog-cart for the promised bride, who had fled from him at the last moment, and, knowing this, Gavin and Babbie went on to the gipsy camp and were there married, gipsy fashion, over the tongs.

A drought of many weeks was broken that night by a deluge of rain, preceded by lightning flashes, in one of which Gavin and Babbie were revealed to Rintoul with hands clasped over the tongs. The ceremony had barely taken place when Babbie was snatched from her husband in the darkness—by Rintoul, as Gavin then thought. The storm now increased in violence, and the countryside was soon under water. In the morning Dominie Ogilvy found his schoolhouse surrounded by water, and not far away he discovered Gavin lying exhausted on the hillside. Taking the minister to the schoolhouse, the dominie allowed him to sleep many hours.

When Gavin awoke, fully determined to prevent Babbie's marriage to Rintoul, the dominie, in hopes to change his resolution, revealed the story of their relation to each other, but Gavin remained resolute and set off for the Spittal while Ogilvy departed for Thrums in order to send word to Margaret that her son was safe. The fog was now very dense, and only by great hazard could Ogilvy make his way through the flooded region, and by long détours reach Thrums where, to his great surprise, he found Babbie at the manse.

Her captor at the gipsy camp was not Rintoul but Rob Dow, who, in his insane regard for Gavin, meant to kill Babbie for having led the minister astray, as he explained to her in frenzied language. She managed to escape from him in the darkness, but his own progress was stopped soon after by a

falling tree which pinned one of his legs to the ground. Babbie made her way at length to the manse, where Jean admitted her, and later Rintoul sought her there and begged her to return with him, but she refused. He then departed, and Margaret, who knew nothing of Gavin's love for Babbie, fancied that only a lover's quarrel was now dividing Babbie from Lord Rintoul.

A cannon-shot was to have been the signal that Rintoul's marriage had taken place, and the roar of falling rocks loosened by the rain was mistaken for the signal by Gavin and others. The minister, on his way to the Spittal, narrowly escaped falling into the foaming Quharity in the mist through the warning of a shepherd; and as the fog lifted slightly they saw Rintoul lying on a fast-vanishing island below. The minister leaped boldly into the torrent, drew the Earl out of the water and tried to restore him to consciousness. In this he succeeded, but so rapidly was the island disappearing that unless help could reach them they would have been drowned in another hour. The Earl shouted out rewards, but his voice could not reach the shepherds and others on the high bank. Then the minister called out the items of his will, concluding by singing the Twenty-third Psalm. All attempts to throw ropes to the two men had failed, when Rob Dow, who had been released from under the tree, with his crushed leg now leaped into the water, holding a rope whose end was caught by the Earl, who, with Gavin, was then drawn to shore in safety, while Rob, whom Gavin tried to grasp, was swept on with the torrent.

Margaret never knew how nearly Gavin came to being turned out of his kirk, but his fortitude won back his people's hearts. "He was an obstinate minister and love had led him a dance, but in the hour of trial he had proven himself a man."

Gavin and Babbie were married by Gavin's predecessor in the manse, while Lord Rintoul returned to his English estates and never came again to the Spittal. As for little Micah Dow, he had always the best of friends in the little minister. Of the dominie in the glen, by his own desire, Margaret never heard.

ANTON GIULIO BARRILI

(Italy, 1836)

THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT (1870)

Among the many pleasantly farcical tales by this author, none is more popular than the following, which has been dramatized for the Italian stage.

CASTELNUOVO BEDONIA, a manufacturing town on the slope of the Apennines, rejoiced in the possession of a forceful Subprefect. He and his wife—they had no children—were quartered, along with many other officials, in the Government building. It was currently reported that the Registrar was soon to be turned out of his apartment there because the Subprefect required more room. The Subprefect's wife was very agreeable when not descanting upon her husband's wrongs. Perhaps she had good cause to complain, for several officers had already been promoted over her husband's head, in absolute disregard of his right to advancement. The Subprefect listened to his wife and smiled, for he beheld the day speedily approaching when justice would be done him.

For two months Subprefect Tiraquelli had been holding weekly receptions, an unprecedented novelty, which gave rise to endless gossip. The Minister of the Interior had promised to eject the Registrar from the Government building, and to give Tiraquelli the whole second story, in order that the famous receptions might continue. The question was: Why should a subprefect, with a salary of only four thousand lire and no private resources, permit himself the expensive luxury of weekly receptions? And why was the Minister so interested?

From these receptions the townspeople held aloof at first.

Occasionally there was a new visitor, and lately an archeologist had appeared there—the Duca di Francavilla. He was an amateur; but no professional could have been more enthusiastic. The Duke was handsome, young, witty, elegant, and democratic. After his arrival in town, the Subprefect's receptions became triumphant successes. The host enthusiastically chanted his praises and foresaw the approach of the day when the whole district would become loyal to the policy of the party in power. To this end Subprefect Tiraquelli labored, and in pursuance of this aim he had a private talk with one of his guests, Signor Prospero Gentili, and set forth to him an attractive scheme. He endeavored to persuade Signor Gentili that he would certainly become a chevalier, or even a commander with the collar, if he would only be complaisant. Then he declared that the Government wished the Duca di Francavilla to marry Signor Gentili's very wealthy orphan niece and ward, Signorina Adele Ruzzani. Signor Gentili replied that the young lady might take it into her head not to like the arrangement, in which case he should be helpless. Her head, not her heart, was what he feared. She was very fond of her liberty, and of gratifying her caprices—and extremely queer caprices they were. He admitted that he was more than eager to see his beautiful niece a duchess, and promised to use his influence with her to bring about the marriage. He accepted the Subprefect's assurance that the Duke was wildly in love with the girl, and believed that he would become "Chevalier" or even "Commander" Gentili.

The chief magnet of the Subprefect's receptions was the young millionairess, Adele Ruzzani. The beautiful Adele wore her fine blonde hair cut short just below her ears, like a medieval page, which was very becoming to her animated face. She cared little for music, danced only when compelled, had no feminine tastes, and lamented her ignorance of Latin and Greek, declaring that she would learn both at the first opportunity. The Duke realized that in order to capture such a girl he must exercise craft. He showered his attentions impartially upon all social ranks in Castelnuovo, nobly paying court to all the elderly ladies, and showing Adele Ruzzani no more attention than the other young girls. He spent his morn-

ings in archeological researches, and his evenings in improving his mind at the Subprefect's receptions.

When the Subprefect and Signor Gentili returned to the drawing-room after their conference, the Duke announced that he had discovered a medieval wonder in the neighborhood—"The Monastery of the Madmen." He explained that while on the way to his excavations, he had met a peasant who had offered to show him a fox's lair as soon as he should have delivered his load at the monastery. The Duke's curiosity was aroused, and after questioning the peasant about the monastery, he decided to accompany him thither. A brief colloquy with the gatekeeper ended in an invitation to the Duke to enter the monastery and take luncheon with the Prior. Visitors were rarely admitted, the gatekeeper explained, because they were generally curious persons who wished to discover who the monks were, and their reasons for living in retirement in this singular "lay monastery." There were nine monks in residence, the Duke said, and five more were expected at any moment. These monks wore snuff-colored habits. Their Prior was a very handsome, intelligent man of five-and-thirty, who had questioned him minutely on his archeological researches, remarking that the brethren intended to undertake something of the sort themselves. In reply to the Duke's somewhat indiscreet questions, the Prior had informed him that their community did not make a specialty of hating women, though the sex might be, in part, the reason for retirement in some cases. He had explained that all the brethren had fled from the world "with the second vocation"; the rather surprising but perfectly natural distinction between that and the first vocation being that, in his youth, every man has two vocations. The first should be distrusted, because it is impossible to discern, at first sight, whether it is true or false; hence the tardy regrets, the frenzies and long agonies of the cloister. The second vocation is the true one, because it comes to those who have had experience in the battles of life, and a man surrenders himself to it with full knowledge.

As the Duke had said, the Monastery of the Madmen was expecting a reënforcement of five. A week later, on the morning that the gatekeeper had received orders to admit these new-

comers as soon as they should present themselves, two persons arrived, and announced that they were desirous of becoming brethren. One was a fair-haired youth, with fine features, an elegant figure, and a beardless face. His anxious-looking companion was an old man, fat, rosy, and shining.

While Father Giocondo was gone to announce them to the Prior, the old man suggested gloomily that they should beat a retreat. But the youth replied: "I've given you my orders, uncle. You must do as I wish, or I'll take a dose of poison. And, see here—there's to be no running away from this place!"

When the handsome Prior Anacleto arrived, the young man answered most of the questions. He announced his age as twenty-two, assured the Prior that his vocation would be of the lasting sort, and allayed his doubts in general. At last Father Anacleto consented that the pair should remain as "novices." A year, six months, three months hence, at their pleasure, said the Prior, the question of their vocation might be discussed again. When told that everyone must have some special occupation, the old man announced himself as an agriculturist, while the seraphic youth admitted he could sing a little, and that he had some skill at the piano and also in drawing. Father Anacleto remarked that, as they were about to set up a scientific journal, to record the results of their studies, and illustrations would be required, the knowledge of drawing would be very useful. He then had the newcomers conducted to their cells, after they had given their names as Prospero Gentili and Adelindo Ruzzani.

Meanwhile, Subprefect Tiraquelli was under the impression that he knew precisely where the future Commander Gentili and his lovely niece were gone. Two days after the Duke's narration of his adventures at the monastery, Signor Gentili had called on the Subprefect, and announced that he and his niece were going to Milan for a week, as Adele had certain purchases to make, and wished to have the family jewels reset. The information about the jewels had precisely the effect which the clever Adele had calculated upon when she ordered her uncle to impart it. No sooner had Signor Gentili taken his departure than the Subprefect wrote a confidential letter to the Minister, announcing that the marriage project was making

the best possible progress, mentioning, in confirmation, the significant fact about the jewels. A few days later, he reflected that Signor Gentili had neither written to him nor left an address. He determined to prove to him that he could discover it; so he telegraphed to an official in Milan inquiring at what inn Signor Gentili was staying. The official reply that no person resembling Signor Gentili, either with or without a niece, was at any hotel in Milan, astonished the Subprefect.

At the second reception from which Adele Ruzzani was absent, the Subprefect had hardly succeeded in soothing the impatient Duke with the story of the visit to Milan, when a certain elderly lady, the Countess Gamberini, revealed to the assembly that Signor Gentili and his niece had gone to become monks in the Monastery of the Madmen! Her agent, on his way from inspecting one of her estates, had caught sight of the pair riding on asses; had concealed himself, and had afterward questioned the peasant who had carried their bags and was returning with the asses. The peasant had heard them state their intention to the gatekeeper.

The Duke was overwhelmed, and sternly demanded of the Subprefect: "What will the Minister say?"

The Subprefect was crushed: the prospect of his commandership was gloomy.

Meanwhile, the two novices had been enjoying an immense success in the monastery. Father Anacleto had explained their presence to the brethren with much plausibility, saying that he had exercised liberty of action in a case not provided for by the rules of their community. Several of the brethren thought "Brother Adelindo" too young, and that he looked like a girl; but all admired "the seraphic youth," and tried to be often in his society. Brother Adelindo spoke in as throaty a voice as he could command, and although timid at first, he speedily gained confidence. In the course of a week life in the monastery underwent a great change.

No work and no recreation could go on except in the company of Brother Adelindo. All were full of good-will, and everything was soon made ready for issuing their great work, the scientific journal, the edition of which was to be strictly limited to a copy for each brother, and an extra one for the

monastery library. Everyone felt that the first number must contain some sketches by Brother Adelindo. Accordingly, an expedition was undertaken to the Cave of the Witches, and their explorations yielded abundant material for the pencil of the fair-haired brother, who sketched diligently while the other fifteen monks stood around him in a state of rapt admiration.

As a matter of fact, every one of them had divined that "Brother Adelindo" was a woman; but not one announced his discovery to his companions. The scientific journal lagged; little was written, nothing at all profitable was thought of in the cells of the recluses. Everything and everybody revolved around Brother Adelindo.

Presently the gatekeeper began to be besieged by would-be visitors. They came singly, they came in groups. Father Anacleto became suspicious, and gave orders that no one was to be allowed to enter. If a visitor came with a specific request to see a particular brother, he was forced to remain in the parlor at the bridge, enjoying the fresh air, until the gatekeeper had informed the person wanted and had brought him. Obviously, these new visitors were curious persons from Castelnuovo; for it now seemed to require two or more persons to bring a basket of eggs, or any other object for the monastery's use.

One day Father Prospero was summoned to the parlor. He showed no surprise. In fact, the visit had been announced to him in a letter, over which he had pondered long. He had not shown it to the fair-haired seraph. Truth to tell, he was tired of the eternal buzzing of the apocryphal friars around the young monk, and the letter was more than welcome. Father Prospero's visitor was the Subprefect, who laughed at his rotund form in the snuff-colored habit (which enhanced the charms of Brother Adelindo, by the way), and reproached him for allowing himself to be led by a girl's caprices, and for not having informed his friends of this strange action. Father Prospero replied that Adele had made him conform to her will from the age of six months, when he had taken charge of her at her mother's death; but he declared that he asked nothing better than to be rescued from his present predicament.

The Subprefect promised to counteract the gossip of the town; but insisted that Signor Prospero and his niece must go

to Turin for a month, setting out by night in a carriage which he would send. Poor Signor Prospero said his niece would never consent; she was enjoying herself hugely! She had bewitched all the brethren, who waited upon her and sang her praises all day long; Father Anacleto was the only one who had not lost his head.

The Subprefect declared that Father Anacleto was the most dangerous of them all; he was a former cavalry officer from Ferrara, who had resigned and had flung himself into politics, of which he had soon wearied. He had had endless love-affairs, and, one fine day, had taken it into his head to reform the world; and this queer lay monastery was his freak. The girl would end by falling in love with him or some other one of the brethren, if she remained there.

Signor Prospero, thoroughly alarmed, promised to aid in any plan of rescue which the Subprefect might invent. On his return to the monastery, he found that all the brethren had disappeared. They were holding a serious conference in the Chapter-room, and the doorkeeper refused him admittance, on the ground that he was still a novice. Accordingly, he set out in quest of his niece, who also had disappeared; and after a long search he arrived in the library. "Where the devil can she have gone?" he exclaimed aloud. A low hiss answered him from a balcony, and his niece signaled to him that he was to keep quiet while she listened to the discussions of the Chapter! When the brothers had retired to the Chapter-room, she had set out in quest of a post of observation, and had discovered an attic intended for drying fruits, situated directly above the Chapter-room. In the uncarpeted floor she found a hole, which enabled her to see and hear, by turns, all that took place in the Chapter-room. The discussion there waxed warm. Some of the new arrivals protested strongly against the presence of women in the monastery, and asserted that young Brother Adelindo was a woman. Father Anacleto argued that a woman had once been Pope, that women had served with distinction in various armies, and had never been expelled from their regiments, even when their sex became known. By analogy, therefore, there was no reason why so quiet and gentle a person as Brother Adelindo should be expelled, even though a convent

might be a more suitable place for her. The Prior remarked, further, that he had suspected Brother Adelindo's sex on the third day after her arrival, but had not interfered, because all the brethren were gentlemen; adding that to refuse her admission, even had they known her sex beforehand, would have been equivalent to declaring that they were afraid of women. If her presence was a temptation, let them thank Fate, which had thrown in their way such a peril—one which had been encountered and overcome by divers saints and holy men.

This exordium was received with cries of "Stupendous!" "Divine!" "Immense!" by the brethren (and by the seraph, in her hiding-place, with a gratified smile); but there were enough dissenting voices to cause Father Anacleto to offer his resignation, with the suggestion that they should elect another prior. It was decided to postpone action on this point; also, that the two novices were not to be allowed to get wind of the fact that they were objects of suspicion.

Brother Adelindo, perceiving that the Chapter was on the point of adjourning, flew down through the library (where her uncle was peacefully slumbering), and out of doors.

Meanwhile, Father Anacleto was suffering from the consciousness that he had worked out an intricate problem without having taken into account one element which now threatened to destroy all his calculations. He had suspected from the first that Father Prospero's nephew was a woman; but he had ignored the possible consequences of that fact upon the monastery family. He was driven to meditate upon his own real view of her. Before long he noted a curious fact: the two fathers who had been his partizans in the Chapter began to change their honeyed speech toward him for one tinged with bitterness, while all his opponents became extremely devoted to the disturbing youth, considerably more so than Father Anacleto relished. This was the situation of affairs when the Subprefect called upon the Prior, and was promptly received. The Subprefect explained his visit by saying that he was inspecting communities in his district and asked to be shown the monastery. Father Anacleto courteously complied, but sent word to the brethren that as many as wished might come

to luncheon with the Subprefect, and that any who were ill would be served in their own apartments. If the Subprefect had hoped to surprise Adele Ruzzani by this visit, his calculations were upset by the Prior's quick wit.

The Subprefect announced to Father Anacleto, as the chief object of his visit, that he wished to inquire whether there were any women in the monastery; a rumor being current in Castelnuovo that a young girl, with her elderly uncle, had run away from her home to the monastery, and was still there. The Prior replied that the girl was there, but of her own free will, and under no constraint to remain. The Subprefect suggested that gossip was rife, and that if the young lady did not return home promptly she never would be able to get a husband, in spite of her millions—unless someone should present himself who could testify that this most imprudent caprice could not possibly cast a shadow on her good name.

Father Anacleto exclaimed impetuously that the Subprefect need have no fear: no one there wished to marry, or to set traps for wealthy girls, and that as tranquillity was the chief blessing they had sought in this solitude, their peace demanded that Signorina Adele Ruzzani should leave the monastery as speedily as possible. The Subprefect rapturously embraced the Prior and departed.

Father Anacleto had observed three vacant places at luncheon, and had been told that Father Agapito had accompanied Brothers Prospero and Adelindo to the woods. At this he had felt a certain irritation. He now proceeded in search of the missing trio. As he approached the woodland, hearing voices, he peeped through the bushes and beheld a most idyllic scene. Prospero was stretched out on the turf, with his head resting against a projecting rock, and his face covered with his handkerchief. Beside him sat the fair-haired brother with lap full of flowers, while Father Agapito, close at hand, was plucking sprays of clematis. These Brother Adelindo wove into a garland, then placed it on his head, resembling then some of the youthful friars in a fourteenth-century picture; while Father Agapito, in ecstatic admiration, represented a Dominican or Franciscan monk from one of the same pictures. Father Anacleto, restraining his inclination to dash from his hiding-place,

stole away, muttering: "Devil take it! I must put an end to this, or peace will vanish!"

Returning to the monastery, he informed his comrades as to the object of the Subprefect's visit, and announced the identity of the novices.

In the course of the discussion that followed, Father Restituto, with a candor which smacked of irony, was defending Brother Adelindo as "a very nice boy, the light and joy of the monastery," when the three absentees made their appearance, and the seraph inquired why the Subprefect had come. The Prior requested her to come to him after dinner, with her uncle; but she declared that she preferred to hear the story alone, and would go to the garden, where the Prior might join her.

When the brethren beheld the Prior and Brother Adelindo strolling off to the garden, they decided that the Prior had no right to send the fair guest away without consulting them. They also decided that the conference in the garden must be broken up, and that the proper person to do it was Father Prospero, who was asleep in the library. When they awakened him he responded phlegmatically to their persuasions, and said he would depart at once with his—nephew! Father Agapito suggested that the Prior's heart was touched, and that if he found himself Adelindo's chosen companion he would abstain from ordering the pair away, in which case Father Prospero would be compelled to remain in the monastery forever. This moved Father Prospero to set out for the garden; but he turned back, reflecting that if his niece and Father Anacleto loved each other the monastery was fated to come to a speedy end, and that he would then be free.

Accordingly, he told the disappointed brethren that whatever the Prior did would be well done; whatever pleased his niece would please him; and he resumed his interrupted nap.

Meanwhile, the Prior was trying to explain to Brother Adelindo the Subprefect's errand, but found it somewhat difficult, as the roguish girl declared that the Adele Ruzzani in question was her sister, and persisted in discussing the matter from that point of view, which gave her the opportunity to say many things concerning the numerous proposals she had received on account of her wealth; about a woman's own feelings regarding suitors

in general, and mentioning the latest of her own suitors (the Duke), who was being forced upon her, whereas she preferred to wait for a man who would love her sincerely. But in spite of her cleverness this discussion did not lead the Prior to express his love, and Brother Adelindo inquired why he had withdrawn from the world. Chiefly, the Prior replied, because he had fancied himself to be in love, and had discovered that he was mistaken. He hinted at Father Agapito's admiration for Brother Adelindo; for himself, he said, he would cling to the peace he had acquired. Thereupon the fair seraph read him a lesson upon the disgrace of a soldier deserting the battle of life, and wound up by imploring him to leave the monastery, declaring that, while he might be keeping the Ten Commandments with all due strictness, he was breaking the Eleventh Commandment—that which is assumed by the first ten, and which includes all the rest. That Commandment, she told him, is: "Thou shalt remain in the company of thy fellowmen; thou shalt live their life; thou shalt love and suffer with them: For it is not permitted to thee to alienate thyself from the general law." She added that there was a penalty for breaking this commandment, and that Father Anacleto might meditate for himself as to what it was; meanwhile, was she to be permitted to remain at San Bruno, or must she take her departure? The Prior reluctantly pronounced his decision: She must depart on the morrow. And at five o'clock the next morning she forced her uncle to return with her to Castelnuovo, despite his efforts to carry out the Subprefect's suggestion that they spend a fortnight or a month in Turin, Venice, and other places. After their departure, the gatekeeper knocked at the Prior's door, and handed him a card, whereon, handsomely engraved, was Signor Prospero Gentili's name, accompanied by a daintily penciled message of thanks for the hospitality shown to Signor Gentili and his niece, and an invitation to call at the Palazzo Ruzzani.

All night the Prior had been paying the penalty for breaking the Eleventh Commandment! He was soon called to account by his fellow-monks for the departure of their guests. The discussion grew warm, and Father Agapito expressed the view of the rest when he declared that the seraph's confession as to

her true name and station was invalid, because it had been made to the Prior alone, whereas the whole Chapter had the right to hear it. The Prior retorted by addressing Father Agapito by his worldly name, and ended by remarking that a pair of Toledo blades and two sword-canes hung upon the walls of his cell. Father Agapito promptly accepted this challenge and addressed the Prior by his secular name. Seconds were chosen at once, and a duel was arranged to take place immediately. Just as the adversaries were on the point of attacking, the eight monks not engaged arrived in a body to protest, declaring that the population of Castelnuovo would take advantage of such a scandalous proceeding as a duel to say all possible evil of the monastery. Father Agapito, highly incensed at the interruption, exclaimed that the monastery might go to the devil; which, being interpreted in plain and polite language, declared Father Restituto meant: "Let us dissolve the community." Of truth, the demon had entered there, darkness and the shadow of death had overwhelmed it since that woman had departed. Father Marcellino expressed his surprise at that opposition, on the part of Father Restituto, to the order of the Prior—"the only man among us who has not lost his head in love."

"You are mistaken, Marcellino," replied the Prior, gravely; "I am more in love with her than all the rest of you put together."

But when the Prior declared that he had not even asked the lady about her sentiments, Father Agapito offered Father Anacleto his hand, and the adversaries embraced. Father Agapito then announced that all the monks, beginning with the Prior, were at liberty to pay court to the seraph, if they wished. Father Anacleto reaffirmed his desire to resign the post of Prior; and when Father Restituto proposed that Father Marcellino's suggestion as to the dissolution of the monastery should be adopted, because they had been opposing the law of nature, Father Anacleto proclaimed to them the Eleventh Commandment.

On the morning after their return home, Signor Gentili made his official appearance in the town, and met curious questions and spiteful insinuations with much courage and skill. The Subprefect received him warmly, addressed him

as "Commander," and warned him that the Duca di Francavilla would call on the following evening to make his official proposal for his niece, and must be promptly accepted. In reporting to the Minister the return of Signor Gentili and his wealthy niece, the Subprefect explained that their absence had been protracted to a month on account of the former having fallen seriously ill in Turin.

The next day Signorina Adele Ruzzani was kept busy receiving calls from several gentlemen who were not residents of the town. Late in the afternoon a card was brought to her, whereon, under a count's coronet, handsomely engraved, was the name: "Valentino Gualandi del Poggio." Below, in pencil, was written: "Anacleto." Sending the servant in search of her uncle, Adele flew to the mirror, surveyed her blushing face, then hastened to the drawing-room, where the Count announced to her that he had resigned his office, and that the monastery was dissolved. She remarked that she knew these facts already. In reply to his surprised inquiry, she confessed that two of the brethren had called on her the day before; four had called that day, and she was now momentarily expecting the few remaining members of the community, who had appeared to regard her with friendly eyes, she said, modestly lowering her gaze.

When Signor Prospero returned home, and was informed by the servant of this latest visitor, he could not reconcile his niece's apparent satisfaction at leaving the monastery with the equally apparent intention of the entire brotherhood to transfer themselves to her house. The Count was invited to remain to dinner; and when Signor Prospero left him alone with Adele a few moments, he ventured to inquire the object with which his fellow "monks" had called, professing inability to believe that they should have come to ask her hand unaccompanied by the necessary grave and reasonable relative, whose presence was required by etiquette under such circumstances. The young lady reassured him by saying that, as she had set them a bad example by her trip to the monastery, she had pardoned their neglect of etiquette. Thus encouraged, the Count informed her that he had sent a telegram to his elderly cousin, the Marchese Melli, begging him to come to Castelnuovo at once, on

vitally important business; but that now he asked for her hand himself. The roguish girl replied that she would take the matter under consideration. But when the Subprefect arrived, she introduced the Count to him as her betrothed, to the amazement of both gentlemen. The Subprefect contented himself with swearing at her uncle, and was not consoled when the Count announced to him the dissolution of the monastery, quoting to him his own words: "A lay monastery is a bad example, a treason to society."

When the Subprefect reported to the Minister the frustration of their plans, he added that, thanks to his astuteness, he had succeeded in suppressing the undesirable lay monastery of San Bruno, and that the monastery property had been presented to Castelnuovo. But the Minister was not greatly impressed, and sent him no reward but the chevalier's cross of an order—which added no dignity, as he already possessed the same sort of cross in another order.

A few weeks later, the wedding of Count Gualandi del Poggio and Adele Ruzzani was celebrated. Before leaving Castelnuovo for their new home, they made a pilgrimage to the deserted monastery; and there, for the first time, the mischievous bride learned of the duel which, on her account, had come so near being fought.

ARLO BATES

(United States, 1850)

A WHEEL OF FIRE (1885)

The author planned and began this story, and then laid it aside as too painful. Upon his repeating the plot to Mr. Howells, however, he was encouraged to finish it. The comedy scenes between Elsie and Dr. Wilson were introduced largely to enliven the story and by contrast to heighten the pathos of the loneliness of Damaris. We present here the author's own synopsis.

DAMARIS WAINWRIGHT was in perfect harmony with her surroundings, as she sat in the library of her colonial mansion, discussing matters of importance with her lawyer, Sherlock Lincoln.

The room, like every other apartment in the old Wainwright house, had scarcely changed in appearance since colonial days. The Wainwrights had lived in the mansion, father and son, for more than two centuries; and, as blood in America goes, not even that of the most gallant Virginian, or the stateliest Knickerbocker of them all, was more purely blue than that which faintly flushed the cheek of Mistress Damaris, as she sat there in her deep mourning, the light of the fire within, and of the fading day without, illuminating her slender figure.

The interview with her lawyer had been brought about by the recent death of her mother, and Damaris, having been made executrix of her estate, had sent for Mr. Hamilton, her legal adviser, to arrange matters with him. A sudden attack of illness had made it impossible for Mr. Hamilton to accede to her request, so in his place he had sent Sherlock Lincoln, his junior partner, who never had met Miss Wainwright. He was impressed by her air of deep melancholy, and did not understand her vehement assertion that she never would marry. After

taking leave of her, however, he was followed to the door by Hannah Stearns, the aged housekeeper, whose startling revelations filled him with horror and pity.

She told him that the taint of insanity was in the family; that Damaris's mother had been insane during the last ten years of her life, and that her only brother, who was also demented, was incarcerated in a private asylum. Lincoln left the house deeply impressed by the charm and sadness of Miss Wainwright, and by the tragedy which enfolded her.

Staying with Damaris was her cousin and lifelong friend, Elsie Dimmont, but in spite of their close relationship the two were not really in sympathy. Elsie was gay and frivolous, while her cousin, who felt the blighting shadow of madness hanging over her, was unable to throw off her continual melancholy.

Her first knowledge of the family doom had come to Damaris in her nineteenth year, when her brother was stricken with this terrible malady upon the night of his graduation from Harvard College. John Wainwright had been an athlete and a social leader, and was exceedingly popular with his classmates. His dreadful doom came upon him like a thunderbolt, and to Damaris the shock was one never to be forgotten. Up to this time she had been a happy, careless girl, unconscious of impending evil, but from the moment she hastened to her mother with the terrible tidings she was a changed being.

Damaris never forgot the calmness with which her mother received the dreadful news, and her remark, "Has it come, then?" was a revelation, the shock of which changed her whole life. With a thrill of deadly pain she realized that she, no less than her brother, might be born to this heritage of woe, and that the time allotted before the curse should fall was but a respite granted by the fates. Henceforth a perpetual fear preyed upon Damaris's life, carrying away all joy and rending her heart with hopeless anguish.

On the evening following her interview with Lincoln, Damaris sat with Elsie, watching the dying embers of the woodfire on the hearth and trying to throw off the usual cloud of sadness. A wild November storm was raging, which added to the gloom of the old house, and both girls were under the spell of

the many sad memories connected with it, though they tried to overcome these impressions.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a startling peal of the door-bell, and from their seats by the fire Damaris and Elsie could hear the suppressed murmur of conversation, of which the words were not audible.

Damaris started to her feet, and with the words, "It is about John, Elsie," hurried to the hall door.

Her premonition proved only too true, as she was met with the tidings that her brother had escaped from the asylum and was presumably trying to make his way to his home.

This painful news was brought by Dr. Chauncey Wilson, a young physician who had been one of those in charge of Wainwright's case at the hospital, and who was at once received into the household pending John's expected arrival.

Some hours later the invalid was discovered by Damaris's faithful dog, Wallace, lying in the snow within a few feet of his own door. The exposure and exertion were followed by a severe illness, during which he was tended by Dr. Wilson and the loyal old housekeeper, Hannah Stearns.

During the trying days of sickness, Damaris found her only solace in the companionship of Sherlock Lincoln, and for him she conceived a deep and violent attachment, such as she never had felt for anyone before.

John Wainwright's illness ended suddenly and tragically. His nurse was obliged to leave him for a time, and in the interval Elsie was stationed to keep watch just outside his chamber door. After what appeared to her to be a suspiciously long silence, she cautiously looked in to assure herself that all was well. Then she found that her cousin had managed with stealthy silence to hang himself. An immediate and careful examination proved that life was already extinct. Thus had one more calamity, never to be effaced or forgotten, come darkly into the history of the old house. Elsie's fright and horror were indescribable when she saw what had happened, but even in her frenzy she was able to hide the truth from Damaris, and pretended, when questioned, that she had slipped and turned her ankle.

Hannah Stearns, a pillar of strength on all occasions, took

charge of affairs at this crisis, and she and Dr. Wilson settled matters and kept secret all details.

The bereaved sister bore her loss with stoical resignation, and looked upon her brother's death as a release from a life of misery and suffering.

After the funeral Damaris presented Lincoln with a valuable intaglio ring, which had belonged to her brother and which she requested him to wear for his sake and hers. Lincoln was much embarrassed and touched by this unexpected gift, and responded in a confused manner that he was ready to serve her in every way, and, as far as it was possible, would be glad to fill her brother's place. Damaris thanked him for his kindness, and he left her with the realization that he was growing to care deeply for her.

While Damaris had been finding solace in the companionship of Lincoln, Elsie had been passing away the time in a flirtation with Dr. Wilson; although this young man was not to the "manner born," and had risen from the ranks through his own exertions, he had a strength of character which made up for his lack of polish and social training.

Elsie, who had always associated with the men who belonged to her own exclusive circle, found in Dr. Wilson a type entirely new to her and played with him accordingly.

One day when seeking for diversion, Elsie amused herself by showing Dr. Wilson some of the heirlooms and curios that the old house contained, and chief among these was an exquisite chalice of rare old German glass whose associations made its value priceless.

It had been used as a betrothal cup for many generations in the family and had been originally presented to a remote ancestor by a German prince.

After displaying the treasure, Elsie endeavored to restore it to its place, but in doing so, to her horror, snapped the delicate stem from the bowl.

She was filled with consternation and was undecided whether to confess the accident to Damaris or to conceal it; finally she settled on the latter plan, satisfying her conscience with the thought that her cousin had so many things to worry her it would be wicked to add one more to the number.

After John Wainwright's death, it was decided that Damaris must have a change of scene, and so she and Elsie returned to the city, for a visit at Elsie's home.

The Dimmonts' residence was in a fashionable part of Boston, and the family was well known in the social doings of the city. But Damaris found it impossible to forget her grief in spite of her cheerful surroundings, and the efforts of her relatives to divert her from her sad memories were unavailing.

One evening, soon after her arrival, while sitting in the library of her uncle's home with her friend Sherlock Lincoln, her despondency was so great that he endeavored to rouse her from it.

"Come," he said, with brusk decisiveness, "this will not do at all. I don't pretend to know what your philosophy of life is, but at least there is no doubt that you have had so much hard fortune that you refuse to expect anything else. I don't wonder at it. I've no especial right to lecture you like a schoolgirl, but I cannot bear to see you turning away from the sun, and from all the joy there is in the world. Life isn't on the average either sad or painful. Sorrow isn't our normal condition. That your life has been so bitter thus far is so much evidence that better things are to come. Don't give yourself up to grief, Miss Wainwright; it isn't wise and it isn't brave."

Damaris lifted a face strongly marked, not with indignation, but with pain, as she answered:

"But what can life do for me? I am only wearing out the brief respite before my hereditary doom falls on me."

"You are wrong," he cried, in tones of the most absolute conviction. "I tell you, you are no more under doom than I am. I know it, and you are wilfully throwing away the possibilities of life by believing it."

"Oh, no," she interrupted, painfully, "no, no; not wilfully."

"Yes," he repeated, "wilfully. It is wrong to yourself and it is wrong to others."

She grew so deathly white that not even the gay lamp-shade could conceal her pallor. He feared she would faint, but she drew herself up with a quick, shuddering breath, and he started from his seat and walked to the fire.

Lincoln then explained to Damaris that he spoke with the authority of Dr. Wilson and another eminent doctor, who agreed that insanity was not hereditary, and reiterated that it was necessary that she rid her mind of dreadful thoughts at once.

Damaris was greatly shaken by Lincoln's words, which brought with them conviction; but her morbid brooding of years on this subject had worked upon her mind so that she was beyond the point of dispassionate reasoning.

She lifted to Lincoln a face over which the tears streamed in a bitter flood.

"You mean to be kind," she moaned, "but oh, you are so cruel!"

"I am cruel to be kind," he returned, never shrinking, although his own eyes were wet. "I cannot let you be the victim of this horrible nightmare. You must believe me."

She leaned back in her chair as if utterly exhausted, with an aspect of wo pitiful to see.

"I will go now," Lincoln said, with a world of tenderness and pity in his voice. "But you must believe what I say. Good-by."

And where he left her, half fainting in her chair, Elsie, on her return from the theater, found her.

Soon after this interview, Damaris returned to her home, and very shortly she received a visit from Sherlock Lincoln, during which he declared his love for her and finally persuaded her to confess her affection for him. After he had overcome her many scruples regarding their engagement, and had at last won her consent, he said:

"Dearest, you shall never regret this. I have said to myself that I must win you for my wife from the first day I ever saw you. I could not have given you up."

Damaris bent over his hand as he spoke and kissed it; then she flushed rosy red, and to cover her confusion she rose quickly and opened the narrow door of the quaint china-closet beside the chimney.

"There has never been a betrothal in our family," she said, taking down the morocco case in which was kept the old Wainwright glass, "or at least none for a century, that has not been

pledged in this glass. Though betrothals," she added, "have long been unheard of here."

She placed the case upon the small old-fashioned table which held the lamp, and with her hand upon the lid, turned toward him a face so full of archness that he hardly recognized it.

"It is so strange that I can hardly believe it real," she laughed. "I never believed the old glass would be filled for me. I am not sure even now that fate will not interpose in some unexpected way."

He bent forward and kissed her bright face, which, mingled with its joy, had a tremulousness that suggested tears.

"I think we can afford to defy fate now," he answered. "If love isn't stronger, then one can have faith in nothing."

Her look of response was eloquent. She unfastened the clasp and opened the case. Glittering in its velvet bed lay the antique glass, reflecting the lamplight in many tinted rays; but when Damaris lifted it, only the bowl came, the standard lying separated in its place. A sudden pallor quenched the joy of her face, as a black flood may cover golden sands. All women are superstitious when love is concerned, and the coincidence was in itself too painful to be lightly regarded. Damaris turned to her lover a face full of terror.

"Fate *has* prevented!" she said.

Sherlock Lincoln was a man of too resolute a fiber and of too absolute self-control to lose his presence of mind in this emergency.

"Nonsense," he returned, taking the glass. "When fate attempts a thing she does it more thoroughly. We can drink out of this perfectly well. And if you are set on an omen," he added, smiling at his whim, "you may regard this as a symbol that our life is detached from the past and from all you have feared from it."

After the betrothal Damaris went back to the city for another visit with the Dimmonts, and she and Elsie, who had become engaged to Dr. Wilson, found their love-affairs most absorbing.

Arrangements were hastened for the marriage of Damaris and Lincoln, as he was desirous to have as little delay as

possible, and was impatient for the time to come when he could shield his betrothed from the sorrows that had encompassed her so long.

The wedding-day arrived and was sunny and bright, as all bridal days should be. Damaris, dressed in her bridal robes by Hannah and Elsie, was very beautiful, though pale as a statue, and awaited her lover, who was to have a few moments with her before the ceremony.

Suddenly it seemed to Damaris as if a hand of ice clutched her heart. Since the question of her right to marry had been the problem which had tortured her, the ceremony itself had come illogically but naturally to seem the awful crisis, and she was possessed by a vague feeling that, if she could so far evade the vigilance of malevolent fate as to go through the actual rite, she might yet escape. She felt as if she could not bear the delay of an instant, so strongly was she oppressed with a horrible sense that her doom was approaching with swift feet, and that if she were not Lincoln's wife before the horror could reach her, she must fall a victim to its fury. The moments she waited seemed to her endless. She heard Hannah moving in the next room, unwilling to go down-stairs before her mistress, and it was with difficulty that Damaris restrained herself from calling out to bid her inquire why the bridegroom did not come.

Then she smiled with a painful sense of her folly, and endeavored to be reasonable. She knew it had in reality been but a moment since Elsie left her, and she tried to give her whole attention to the details of her toilet. She looked into the mirror to see whether the lace at her throat was graceful in its folds, and suddenly, without warning, a horrible fancy came to her that it would be a wild joy to clutch such a soft white neck with fierce fingers and crush out all the life! She seemed impelled to reach out to catch and strangle that image in the glass, and at the same time she felt, in a strange double consciousness, as if someone behind her chair were preparing to seize her. Then with a thrill of agony she realized what she was thinking, and she cast around her a beseeching glance, vainly seeking help.

Yet surely that girl in the mirror was another creature than

herself. Damaris extended her hand toward the figure with a mocking gesture, and laughed a little, in an absent-minded, absorbed fashion, when the white-robed stranger did the same. She dropped her hands into her lap, and, watching with a glance of horrible cunning from beneath her drooping lids the white, smooth neck of that other girl, she began with furtive haste to pull off her gloves. She would assure herself whether the fair throat were as soft as it appeared; and with motions catlike and swift, she cast the gloves to the floor and rose to steal upon the stranger.

Then it occurred to her that this must be some guest at her own wedding, and the hereditary instinct of hospitality asserted itself. She sank back into a chair, with hands falling passive in her lap. She felt confused and dizzy. Something seemed to be unutterably wrong, and she knew not what it was. Why should this stranger be here, and why did she regard her so closely? She struggled with her wandering thoughts, striving to understand how it chanced that she was not alone.

Watching intently, she saw with a shock of surprise and pity that this hapless girl in the mirror was twisting her fingers in the well-remembered gesture which her mother had shown in the coming on of madness. Damaris was seized with a great compassion of grief for the fair young creature whom such an awful doom had overtaken. The fate of this stranger had been swifter, Damaris reflected, than the feet of her bridegroom! Her bridegroom! The word touched the very core of her half-dazed intelligence. Like the swift thrust of a white-hot sword, with rending, searing agony, the truth came home to her. She knew the image of herself!

The unspeakable anguish of ages of pain was concentrated into that moment. It was like the horror of one who hangs a measureless instant upon the dizzy brink of an abyss down which he knows himself dashing. That fatal gesture which she knew so well smote the hapless bride with a terror too great for words. All power failed her; she could not breathe; an intolerable pressure crushed her bosom. Great drops of suffering beaded her forehead, and she gasped with an absolute sense of suffocation as if an ocean wave had suddenly rolled over her.

She heard her dog at the door, and with a mad impulse to flee she sprang to her feet just as Lincoln knocked.

The sound seemed to come from some far distance, and was muffled and half lost amid the confused murmur which filled her ears like the beat of rushing waters.

Then once more for an instant her failing reason struggled to consciousness, as a drowning swimmer writhes a last time to the surface and gasps, only to yield his breath in futile bubbles that mark the spot where he sank. With a supreme effort, her vanquished will for a moment reasserted itself; she knew her lover was at the door, and she knew also that the feet of doom had been swifter than those of the bridegroom. She even asked herself in agonized frenzy whether she might not have been saved had Sherlock reached her a moment sooner. And as she thought she sprang forward and opened the door.

"I am mad!" she shrieked, in a voice which pierced to every corner of the old mansion.

The housekeeper came running from the inner chamber, while Wallace shrank whining at his mistress's feet. Lincoln, white as death, caught Damaris in his arms, as if he would snatch her from the jaws of death itself if need be. She struggled in his embrace, a wild glare in her eyes replacing the flickering light of intelligence.

Then Hannah Stearns took her from her bridegroom, drew her into the chamber, and closed the door.

After a few days of suffering, Damaris died and was laid at rest in the quiet country churchyard.

Lincoln, heart-broken and crushed by the sad ending of his hopes, left the scenes which held for him such memories, and went abroad, where he wandered long in an effort to forget.

RENÉ BAZIN

(France, 1853)

THE INK-STAIN (1888)

This is the author's best-known work and was crowned by the French Academy. He is known as the "Apostle of Home Life." The descriptions of French country life and the glimpses into that scholarly sanctuary, the National Library of Paris, have made this book very popular in translation.

I WAS born in La Châtre, and attended La Châtre College for eighteen years. My parents died when I was so young that I barely remember them, and my uncle, M. Brutus Mouillard, a solicitor of Bourges, was appointed my guardian. He had planned to leave me his practise, and therefore when my school-days were over he sent me to Paris to take a course in law. Three years later I became a probationary barrister. In the intervals of my legal studies I took my arts degree, and now I am working for that of Doctor of Laws.

This afternoon, the 10th of December, 1884, when I was at work in the National Library, Paris, writing my thesis for my doctor's degree, a serious accident happened to me, and something tells me that this event is destined to bring about a crisis in my existence. I believe that I owe it to myself to write my memoirs, and that is the reason I have begun to jot down a record of the incidents relating to this misadventure.

Briefly, the affair occurred as follows: I was at the desk where I had written the name of the book I wanted, and, as I laid down the pen, it slipped off the desk and fell upon an Early Text that Monsieur Charnot, a member of the Institute, was reading, depositing thereupon a huge and hideous blot. M. Charnot was enraged, and the librarian hardly less so.

Barely was the blot dry before I, Fabien Jean Jacques

Mouillard, barrister, 91 Rue de Rennes, took up my pen and began writing this book—my memoirs.

Feeling that my first duty was to apologize to the distinguished reader whom I had offended, I consulted Monsieur Flamaran, my professor, as to how I should go about it. He advised me to call on M. Charnot, who was his intimate friend, at his home in the Rue de l'Université.

December 30th. I have seen M. Charnot. The servant ushered me unannounced into the library, where the learned man was spinning a spiral twist of paper under the lamplight to amuse his daughter, a beautiful girl of eighteen. I felt greatly embarrassed, and stumbled through a few infelicitous sentences which were coldly received by the eminent scholar. When I left the room, the young girl was standing motionless, looking at me with the expression of an angry Diana. I imagine that this was because, in trying to say something complimentary about a learned work of which M. Charnot was the author, I stupidly allowed him to know that I was aware that he had published it at his own expense, and that only twenty-seven copies of it had been sold.

December 31st. This New Year's Eve I returned to my lodgings in a very dejected state of mind. After meditating some time, I decided to go to see my dear friend Sylvestre Lampron, whom I found engraving by lamplight. He was copying a portrait he had once painted of a lovely Italian girl; and he told me that while he was painting the original, he and his sitter had fallen in love with each other; that she belonged to a very distinguished family, who would not hear of a daughter of their house marrying an artist; and that they had taken her away. Not long after that she became ill and died. This portrait he cherished, and although her parents had asked for it many times, he never would part with it.

March 3d. The year is advancing, and my essay is growing. I still see M. Charnot reading in the library nearly every day. I am seeking an opportunity of meeting him again, and his lovely daughter is the reason! I may as well own it—I have fallen in love with the beautiful girl who looked at me so angrily. Jeanne is her name, and I have often tried to see her once more, but so far without success. One afternoon I

walked to and fro in front of her house eight times, and yesterday I spent five hours at the spring opening of the Bon Marché, for I thought surely every young woman in Paris would be there. But no Jeanne was to be seen.

April 3d. I have much to write about to-day. I went to the Place St. Sulpice, where the flower-sellers are stationed, and was looking at the floral display when I happened to turn round, and there, only ten feet distant, were my professor, M. Flamaran, M. Charnot, and Jeanne. They had been purchasing flowers and were about to go. I saw them turn to walk toward St. Sulpice, and followed at a distance, but soon lost sight of them in the crowd.

April 27th. The beautiful spring is here, and Lampron and I went on an excursion to "our forest," as we call the forest of St. Germain. We walked to the clear pond in the woods, and Lampron lay down to take a nap. While I was silently contemplating the beauty of the woodland silence, I heard distant voices, and presently saw approaching a man, and a young girl dressed in gray. I felt sure that the young girl was *she*, and as they drew nearer I saw that they were indeed M. Charnot and his lovely daughter. My eyes filled with tears. Not until that moment did I realize how much I loved her. Father and daughter passed on without seeing us. I wakened Lampron, and as he was curious to see my inamorata, he proposed that we catch up with them. After a brisk run, he signaled me from behind a large tree: "Here they are!"

Jeanne and M. Charnot were seated on a fallen trunk. Lampron immediately began to sketch the pair. In his enthusiasm he moved and attracted Jeanne's attention. She turned and saw that I was looking at her, and Lampron sketching her. We bowed, but she only blushed, and smiled a faintly troubled smile. M. Charnot continued reading, but it was evident that his daughter was not listening. Presently they disappeared down the path.

April 28th, 9 P.M. This afternoon I met Lampron with a portfolio under his arm. He was going to see Monsieur Plumet, the frame-maker, and I accompanied him. The door was opened by Madame Plumet, who knew me slightly, for I had given her legal assistance, for which I had made no charge.

M. Plumet said he was overrun with orders and could not frame the picture then; but when Lampron told him that it was the portrait of a young lady with whom his friend was in love, and that his whole future depended upon having the picture hung in the approaching exhibition at the Salon, M. Plumet reconsidered the matter. The portfolio was opened, and there was the little finished sketch of M. Charnot's back and Jeanne's pretty profile in the forest nook! I remarked that I hoped the fair subject would see her portrait at the exhibition; whereupon Madame Plumet inquired her name and address, which I gave. Then she said she knew the wife of a porter who lived near the Charnot household, and that through her, on some manufactured errand, Jeanne might learn that her portrait was in the Salon.

May 1st. These four days just past seemed as if they would never end, but to-day Lampron took me to the salon to see the picture. It was perfect! As soon as we had seen it he left me there alone, and I stood somewhat in the shadow near by, watching for Jeanne. At last she came. She looked at the picture and seemed pleased; then, turning her head, she saw me! She blushed and was almost moved to tears. (O rapture! Jeanne, you are touched; Jeanne, you understand!) At that moment someone called, and she hastened to meet her father. A young man was with him, who spoke to Jeanne, and I heard her answer, "It's nothing, George." Can it be that she loves another?

May 2d. This morning, after being examined for two hours, I received my degree. At the law school to-day I met an acquaintance who said to me:

"Do you know that Mademoiselle Charnot is to be married soon? She is to marry Dufilleul. Don't you know Dufilleul?"

"No."

"Oh, yes, you do. He is always to be seen at the opera with little Tigra of the Bouffes."

"Poor girl! it is too dreadful to see an innocent child married to a rake and gambler!"

My acquaintance tried to assure me that it was not so bad as it might be, for Dufilleul was rich and of a distinguished family.

Alas! All is over between us! She has given me no encouragement—only a smile, a tear.

May 5th. A letter has just come from my uncle, M. Mouillard. He is very angry because I did not set out for Bourges the very evening of the day I took my degree, to begin professional life, where his practise awaits me. I know he will arrive here soon in order to take me home with him.

May 9th. This evening at seven o'clock, just as I was going out to dinner, I saw my uncle coming toward me. We dined together, and he learned my secret, and also how hopeless was my love for Jeanne, because she was engaged to another. He then told me that he did not wish me to bring home any Parisian wife.

May 10th. My uncle is very angry because I will not return with him at once to Bourges. He told me that he was determined to find out whether Jeanne were really engaged or not, and that he had called on her father. M. Charnot remembered having seen me once at the Library, and once at his own house, and was good enough to say that I was a youth of parts. When my uncle told him of my love for Jeanne, he replied that her hand had already been promised. My uncle finished his disconcerting remarks by urging me to start with him to-night for Bourges. I promptly refused to go, and reproached him for having told a secret that was not his to tell; I said also that it would be better for both of us for me to continue to live in Paris, away from him. He was furious, and reminded me that I could not live in Paris on an income of fourteen hundred francs a year. He then left without saying good-by and hurried down the stairs, striking the banisters with his cane and exclaiming, "Damnation!"

May 20th. My time is all my own and I enjoy my freedom. I was brought up with the idea that I was to become a lawyer, but I am convinced that nothing spoils the nobler virtues more quickly than practise at the bar.

I have confided everything to Lampron, who, although glad to have me remain in Paris, warned me that it was "easy to refuse a profession, harder to find another in its place."

June 7th. The die is cast! I will not be a lawyer, and I wrote my uncle a calm, polite letter to that effect.

I realize that it is impossible for me to live on fourteen hundred francs a year, and so, until something better offers itself, I have accepted the position of managing clerk to my old master, Counselor Boule. I correct the drafts of the inferior clerks, instruct the clients how to proceed, go to the courts nearly every day, and hang about chief clerks' and judges' chambers.

One day Madame Plumet called at our office on business. She was surprised to find me there. She told me that she had opened a dressmaking establishment, and that Mademoiselle Charnot had her gowns made there. Then I told her that Mademoiselle Charnot was about to be married to Baron Dufilleul. At this news Madame Plumet became very indignant. She said that he was a dreadful man, and that she knew all sorts of scandalous things about him. She would not talk about her own business after that, for she said that what she had heard had made her so unhappy she had forgotten it.

June 10th. I am on my way to Italy, sent there at a client's expense to prove some copies of deeds. I am allowed two weeks for the trip.

Milan, June 18th. The heat is wilting, and, surrounded by clerks, I am working in the Municipal Palace, in the midst of countless numbers of documents.

A letter has just come from Lampron. He writes me that my rival, Baron Dufilleul, has had his miniature painted for Mademoiselle Tigra of the Bouffes. He left it at Plumet's to be framed, and when he called for it and was holding it in his hand, admiring it, Jeanne walked in. As soon as she saw Dufilleul, she exclaimed:

"Well, sir, and so I've caught you! What are you hiding there? Hand me that portrait. Was it not intended for me?"

Dufilleul explained in a halting way that it was intended for a wedding-present to a friend. Jeanne did not believe this and so she asked Plumet what he knew about it. At this juncture Madame Plumet interrupted:

"Excuse me, Mademoiselle, but I cannot have you deceived in this house. This portrait is for an actress—for Mademoiselle Tigra of the Opéra Bouffes."

Mademoiselle Jeanne then turned the miniature over, and

read on the back: "From Monsieur le Baron D. to Mademoiselle T.—Boulevard Haussmann. To be delivered on Tuesday."

Dufilleul declared it was not his handwriting, that it was some vile conspiracy against him, and so on. But Jeanne was not pacified, and suddenly left the room. On the stairway she heard a high-pitched voice calling: "Well, George, how much longer are you going to keep me waiting?"

Mademoiselle Charnot bent over, and saw, at the bottom of the staircase, a woman looking up. Their eyes met. Jeanne at once looked in another direction. Then she called to Madame Plumet, "Come, Madame, we must go and choose a hat," and closed the dressmaker's door behind her.

Madame Plumet herself had recounted this scene to him, and it was she who had arranged this meeting of Jeanne and her lover. Lampron thinks that the betrothal is definitely at an end. He says that just as he was closing the letter a note came from Madame Plumet informing him that M. Charnot and his daughter had left Paris, though she did not know where they had gone. Lampron says also that his mother is very ill.

Milan, June 26th. My law business here is over to-day, and now comes another letter from Lampron. His mother is dead. She made him promise to give the portrait of the young Italian girl he loved to her family, and he asks me in this letter to visit them at their residence, the Villa Dannegianti, about nine miles from Milan, near the village of Desio, and to tell them that, "in accordance with the dying wish of Lampron's mother, the portrait of Rafaella is to be given in perpetuity to the Villa Dannegianti."

I received this letter about ten o'clock in the morning, and at once took a carriage for Desio, where I stopped at the inn. I heard in the next room someone talking about a collection of valuable Roman coins which was kept locked up in the villa of an Italian nobleman near by; and as I peeped in at the open door I saw M. Charnot and Jeanne! They were very much surprised to see me, and we stood and stared at one another to make sure we were not dreaming. Then M. Charnot, who did not seem very much pleased at seeing me, told the blushing Jeanne to put on her hat, for it was time to go. Turning to me, he made a few remarks concerning the inn, and was about to

depart, when I inquired whether he could tell me the way to the Villa Dannegianti. M. Charnot laughed, and said that he had not been able to gain admission there, although he had two letters of introduction and honorable initials after his name; he added that he was certain I would not meet with success. But I begged him to stay, telling him that, as I bore news of great importance to the family, I was not only sure of being admitted myself, but thought I could obtain permission for him to see the valuable collection of medals in the villa. The old man was delighted at the prospect; and so M. Charnot, his daughter, and I left the inn together.

After walking a mile we arrived at the villa, and I presented my card and Lampron's. The gates were opened and we passed in. M. Charnot and Jeanne waited outside the house until I could gain permission for them to view the collection, and I entered and was shown to the room in which the Countess was seated. She was overpowered with emotion when she heard that she was to have the long-wished-for portrait of her daughter. I then obtained permission for M. Charnot and Jeanne to see the medals. A moment later they entered the museum with me. Jeanne and I talked together while her father looked at the medals. When we had finished it was after eight o'clock and the last train had left Desio; so I suggested that rather than stay all night at an uncomfortable inn, it would be better for them to drive back to Milan with me in my carriage. To this M. Charnot assented. It was a beautiful moonlight night and the learned man, tired with all he had seen, soon went to sleep in the corner of the carriage. For a time I was afraid to speak to Jeanne, for our isolation made me ill at ease. She, too, seemed far away in dreamland. But after a while we began to talk, and the conversation drifted to the portrait of Jeanne that Lampron had sketched, which I said was a similar relic to the portrait of Rafaella I had just told her about, except that I dared to think that I might be less unfortunate than my friend—that my dream might return to me if the original of this portrait were willing!

Jeanne fixed her eyes on me. Then she asked whether I did not think the breeze refreshing. At that moment her father awoke and made an appropriate reply.

Ten minutes later the carriage drove up to his hôtel. He thanked me for a most delightful drive home, hoped we should meet again, and told me that he and his daughter were going to Florence the next day. Mademoiselle Charnot bowed slightly in farewell.

Milan, June 27th, before daybreak. I have spent the night thinking of yesterday's trip. Shall I follow them to Florence? On second thought, I have decided not to go to Florence, but to return to Paris.

Paris, July 2d. A clerk at the office asked me to go fishing with him on Sunday, and on our arrival at the place I found my old professor, M. Flamaran, much to my surprise.

While we were fishing together, he questioned me about my love for Jeanne. He said he had known her all her life, and that he was very anxious when he learned that she was to marry "that scoundrel Dufilleul."

After the day's fishing was over we went to a restaurant for supper, and then my kind friend, M. Flamaran, volunteered to go to Jeanne's father and ask her hand for me.

"Now," said he, "let us talk, and tell me everything." He has a warm, good heart, and I am sure that if anyone can do this for me successfully it is he.

August 2d. After waiting ten days, I received a note yesterday from M. Charnot asking me to call on him that evening. I went in a great state of trepidation.

"Monsieur," said he, "I receive you as a friend. Whatever may be the result of our interview, you may be assured of my esteem, therefore have no fear of answering me frankly."

After questioning me about my parents and my early life, he said:

"Young man, I promised you an answer; this is it. My daughter has at this moment several proposals of marriage. She has weighed and compared them all, and communicated to me yesterday the result of her reflections. To a richer and more brilliant match she prefers an honest man who loves her for herself, and you, Monsieur, are that honest man. But there are two conditions: one is that you promise never to leave Paris, and the other is that you make peace with your uncle."

I promised the former, and said that I would do all in my power to effect the latter.

M. Charnot was very pale. He held out his hand to me and said: "I think, Monsieur Fabien, that we are quite in accord, and that the hour has come—"

Instead of finishing the sentence, he opened the door and said: "Jeanne, Monsieur Fabien accepts the two conditions, my dear."

And I saw Jeanne come smiling toward me!

My rapture was complete. We sat together all the evening; M. Charnot pushed back his chair and tried to read the newspaper; Jeanne and I formed plans for pacifying my uncle, and Jeanne settled the matter by making her father promise to take her to Bourges, where an old friend of theirs lived, saying that while there M. Charnot could return my uncle's call upon him, and somehow patch up the breach, if possible.

August 3d. I am to go to Bourges in advance to choose rooms for M. Charnot and Jeanne; I shall try to see my uncle first, and tell him that M. Charnot and his daughter are traveling in the neighborhood, and that if they happen to be near Bourges they will probably return his visit.

Bourges, August 4th. I called at my uncle's house to-day. Formerly he welcomed me, but now I am averse to meeting him, and the housekeeper is afraid to let me in. My uncle was not at home, nevertheless I went in and sat down to talk to the housekeeper, who told me that my uncle is greatly changed. She said that he had been very moody ever since his return from Paris. I told her of my engagement and said that I had come hoping to effect a reconciliation with him. At this she only shook her head, but promised to conceal me in the house over night, and to let me know when my uncle was in a sufficiently amiable frame of mind to be approached.

I passed the night on the sofa-bed in the library on the first floor.

At seven o'clock in the evening I saw my uncle coming into the house. He went into the dining-room, which was under the library. Just as he had finished dinner a gentleman called, and I could hear them talking together excitedly and even

angrily for three hours. At eleven o'clock I heard my uncle's heavy tread as he went up-stairs to his room.

Bourges, August 5th. I arose at seven o'clock, hoping to see my uncle, but learned that he had gone out at six, which was very unusual. The housekeeper says he has been weeping, and she thinks it is on account of the visitor of last night, with whom he was negotiating for the sale of his practise. She told me also that when he bade her good night he had said: "I am a broken-hearted man! I might have got over it, but that monster of ingratitude would not have it so. If I had him here I don't know what I should do to him." This gave me no little compunction and anxiety.

M. Charnot and Jeanne are to be here at ten o'clock, and I must go to meet them without having seen my uncle.

The train arrived, and M. Charnot, Jeanne, and I stood before the garden gate, to which I have the key. Just as I turned it in the lock, I beheld my uncle on the other side of the fence. It is needless to say that I felt exceedingly nervous. He had reached his front door when he perceived two strangers coming toward him (I had hidden behind the shrubbery). He recognized M. Charnot, was surprised to see Mademoiselle Jeanne. After a few civilities had been exchanged, M. Charnot told my uncle that Jeanne was to marry his nephew, to which my uncle replied:

"Monsieur, I have no longer a nephew."

"He is here."

"And I never asked for your daughter."

"No, but you have received your nephew beneath your roof, and consequently—"

"Never!"

"Monsieur Fabien has been in your house since yesterday; he told you we were coming."

"No, I have not seen him; I never should have received him! I tell you I no longer have a nephew! I am a broken-hearted man, a—a—a—"

He staggered, fell, and lay motionless on his back.

I rushed to the rescue, and Jeanne dipped her handkerchief in water to bathe his brow. M. Charnot and I carried him up

to his room, and he lay there unconscious for ten minutes. Just as the doctor opened the door, my uncle opened his eyes, and his glance rested on Jeanne. "Come," said the doctor, "give your future niece a kiss." Jeanne bent down and my uncle kissed her, saying, "Good girl—dear girl!"

He began to weep, and we were ordered to leave him alone.

In a few moments, much to our surprise, down came my uncle and invited us all to dine with him that night, though he did not seem quite reconciled to me; so Jeanne and I each wrote him a kind and affectionate letter, begging him to forgive us, and to consent to our marriage.

At dinner that night my uncle tried his best to be agreeable, but suddenly at dessert he said: "I have a painful confession to make to you." Then he told us that he had sold his practise the night before, and he feared now that I wanted it. But I assured him that I would not have taken the practise even if he had not sold it. Then M. Charnot said that Jeanne would always have sufficient money for us both, but that he preferred his son-in-law to have some occupation, so he suggested that I should become a librarian.

My uncle looked sad at this, for, as he said, he would often feel very desolate, living all alone. "Oh, no," said M. Charnot, "come to Paris, and live with us."

Paris, September 18th. We are married! We have just come back from the church, and in two hours we shall leave for Italy on our wedding-trip; so I am writing these few last words in my diary.

Uncle Mouillard has arrived in Paris; he is to live near us, and he and M. Charnot have become devoted friends.

Jeanne, my own dear Jeanne, is leaning on me and reading over my shoulder, which distracts the flow of my recollections.

"If you don't mind, Jeanne, I will cherish no ambition beyond your love; and if you agree, Jeanne, we shall see little of society, and much of our friends; we shall not open our windows wide enough for love, who is winged, to fly out. I shall leave you to guide me, as a child, along the joyous path in which I follow your footsteps."

I am looking up at Jeanne.

She has not said "No."

FRANCES COURTENAY BAYLOR

(United States, 1848)

ON BOTH SIDES (1886)

This was its author's first book, and it immediately established her reputation as a writer of vivid and finished style. At the time of its publication no piece of fiction had so well presented the differences in English and American character, manners and social creeds.

LATE in the autumn of 1873, Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, wealthy and refined Americans, returned to England after an extended tour on the Continent and decided to spend the winter in Cheltenham, one of the gayest and most agreeable of the English watering-places.

Mr. Fletcher was obliged to "run over to New York" to put his affairs upon a footing that would permit him to prolong his remain abroad for another year; but during her husband's absence Mrs. Fletcher was not forced to languish alone. She had for company a rather low-spirited mother-in-law, a cheerful sister, named Lucy, and a pretty and accomplished cousin, named Jenny Meredith, all of whom had been *compagnons de voyage* of her husband and herself. Mr. Fletcher was a typical American husband, "who ought always to be painted with a nimbus about his head." This good soul is seldom allowed to travel abroad with only the wife of his bosom for his companion; for when a trip is decided upon, and the plan is unfolded to their joint families, the news is usually responded to in this wise:

"How perfectly splendid! It would be so nice for Sister Lucy to go"; or "Kate has a wonderful voice, which must be cultivated"; or "Mother has always wanted to go abroad"; or "Jack ought really to be sent to Heidelberg."

And consequently the American husband, after one or two feeble remonstrances, sails on the *Scythia* or the *Russia*, with a full complement of petticoated barnacles, and wears his necklace of millstones ever after with the beautiful unconscious grace of the hero and none of the airs of a martyr; and hosts of foreigners hold up their hands and puzzle their heads over the strange spectacle.

Before leaving his family, Mr. Fletcher ensconced them comfortably in a furnished house on the Promenade. The establishment was perfect in every detail, provided with every luxury and comfort, and included a staff of well-trained servants as noiseless as the white cats of the fairy-tale.

First and most important of these was Walton, the butler, whose dignified air and impressive manner completely awed the newcomers.

"I am glad I am going home," said Mr. Fletcher, "instead of staying here in the trying *rôle* of master to that very superior domestic, Walton. I couldn't do it; he would find me out in a week. I should never dare to be helped thrice to anything, unless it was 'cold boiled missionary,' of which he might approve, for he looks like an archbishop. I felt that he was my master the moment he took my overcoat down-stairs. I lost confidence in my tailor on the spot. I felt as if I had come home from school for the holidays, or had done something that I could atone for only by assuming an apologetic attitude and entering upon a course of systematic propitiation."

"Nonsense, Ned! how absurd you are!" exclaimed his wife. "Besides, he who propitiates under such circumstances is lost."

"Oh, you may be sure I didn't give way to the impulse. I frowned, and looked as if my temper were bad, and got up-stairs as soon as possible. I shouldn't in the least mind meeting the Prince of Wales, or the Lord Chancellor; but there is something inexpressibly awe-inspiring about the British flunky. Deny it as we may, very few Americans can honestly say that they feel themselves a match for the majestic, inscrutable creature."

In the course of the following week the Fletchers presented their letters of introduction to two influential families, and were

received with the kindness which characterizes English hospitality.

Invitations to functions of every sort poured in upon them, and Walton was kept busy "shuffling cards" for several weeks.

As a family they met with general favor, and the two girls became immediately very popular, Jenny creating a furor with her beauty and accomplishments.

Among their new friends were Sir Robert Heathcote, a well-preserved man of sixty-five, with the prosperous air which an inherited income of thirty thousand pounds never fails to impart, and his nephew and heir, Arthur Heathcote. The latter was an extremely good-looking young fellow of the conventional London type, knowing full well his advantages as a *bon parti* and prepared not to be taken alive by any matron in the land, be she never so skilful. Another friend was a quiet young barrister named Lindsay, who became an admirer of the fascinating Jenny, while an important factor in their circle was a sweet and gentle little English girl named Mabel Vane.

Mabel, whose father was a poor clergyman, lived very quietly and economically with her mother in lodgings, and, in spite of being well connected, saw very little of the gay world of society.

Lucy and Jenny, having taken an especial fancy to Mabel, decided to do what they could to bring a little more pleasure into her quiet existence, which they considered "a case of destitution in the upper classes."

The Fletchers received cards for a very exclusive ball, and though the invitations were very difficult to obtain, they succeeded in securing an extra one for Mabel, who was overjoyed at the prospect of attending so grand a function. Before the evening in question the Fletchers were surprised by an arrival from the homeland, who was announced by Walton in an intensely respectful manner.

"If you please, 'm, there is a party" (here he coughed discreetly behind his hand), "a person describin' himself as a relative of the family—from America, which I was to say the name is Ketchum—Mr. Job Ketchum is what I was told."

Walton made little pauses between his clauses. He felt that he was impressive. Having finished, he cast one swift

glance around the group, caressed thoughtfully his luxuriant side-whiskers, and dropped his eyes again, waiting for orders.

"Job Ketchum!" cried Mrs. Fletcher, senior, in a tone of horrified amazement.

"Cousin Job!" echoed her daughter-in-law feebly. "What on earth"—can have brought him here? she was about to say, but, catching Walton's deferential eye, she changed it into—"can have prevented his telegraphing or writing us to expect him?" After greeting as cordially as possible the newcomer, who proved to be a cousin from the wild and woolly West, Mrs. Fletcher asked him where his luggage was, as she took it for granted he would remain with them.

"That's all the luggage I've brought," said he, pointing to a shiny black portmanteau on the hall floor. "I didn't want to bother with more, just for a flying trip. I knew I could rig myself out over here if I needed anything; but I guess I'll do as I am. When did you hear from your husband?" he continued, mounting the stairs as he spoke. Then over his shoulder to Walton: "Here! bring that along up to my room, and get me some water."

The ladies winced at this peremptory way of addressing "the archbishop," and were prepared for a revolt; but Walton said, with his usual respectful air, "Yes, sir. At once, sir," and, seizing the bag, disappeared into the back premises.

When Mr. Job Ketchum rejoined his relatives in the drawing-room he entertained them with a vivacious account of his experiences. He explained that he had recently prospered in business, having made "a hundred thousand dollars at a clip," and had decided to leave Tecumseh, Michigan, and go "abrard," to see whether there was anything there worth seeing.

Mrs. Fletcher tried in a tactful way to show Mr. Ketchum that his wardrobe would need replenishing to meet the requirements of his present position; but he did not take kindly to her suggestions, and he finally lost his temper and said hotly: "Damn it! I am an American, and I shall do as I please."

This outburst was rapidly repented of, and Job apologized handsomely and agreed to go to a tailor the following morning to be fitted out in a suitable manner.

Job, on meeting Mabel Vane, was greatly taken with her

pretty face and gentle ways, and made up his mind that he would aid the Fletchers in giving her a good time at the ball. When the night arrived he sent her a huge bouquet, and he also loaded her with attentions at the ball.

Mabel, who had had little experience with the other sex, was much pleased with Job's attentions and he was entirely captivated by the "little English daisy," and decided to make every effort to win her for his wife.

Under Job's rough exterior was a warm and generous heart, and his kindly nature and sterling character were recognized by all those that really knew him.

As Job's attentions to Mabel became more and more marked, Mrs. Vane, who was a weak and worldly woman, decided that it was time to ask him what were his intentions.

A characteristic interview took place between her and Job, in which the latter, who saw plainly through the mother's apparent solicitude for her daughter's welfare, got very much the better of the situation. Before closing the interview, Mrs. Vane remarked to Job that he had done her daughter a great wrong, had blighted her future and kept off other men.

To which Job replied: "I don't want to crowd the mourners; if she wants any fellow to take my place, I'm ready to take a back seat."

This act did not prove necessary, as Mabel wholly reciprocated Job's affection, and he and she were soon happily married. After the wedding Job made such large settlements on his blushing bride that she was quite overcome by his generosity, and Mrs. Vane also was handsomely provided for.

During Job's courtship the Fletchers had continued their enjoyable experiences, which terminated abruptly with the arrival of Mr. Fletcher with the tidings that it was necessary for them all to return home at once.

They packed up immediately, much to the regret of their many friends; and Arthur Heathcote would not be satisfied with Jenny's refusal of his repeated offers until at last she confessed that somebody else was waiting for her in New York.

Mrs. Fletcher's greatest regret in breaking up her English establishment was the parting with Walton, her "perfect treasure." Throughout her housekeeping experiences he had

been her right-hand man on every occasion, and had made himself absolutely invaluable.

Even their packing could never have been accomplished without Walton's efficient services. He ordered, selected, and packed with incomparable judgment and despatch the Fletchers' personal effects, verified the inventory of the house and replaced what was missing, took notes, left cards, and did a thousand last things, as no one else could have done them. Mr. Fletcher was so charmed that he offered him a large advance on his wages if he would go to the United States with them, but he respectfully refused, with many expressions of gratitude for the esteem in which he was held.

"What do you think of doing, Walton?" asked Mrs. Fletcher.

"I'm going abroad, 'm; I have heard of something there that will suit," he replied, and they reluctantly forbore to press him further about remaining in their service.

When they finally tore themselves away from the charming town in which they had grown to feel at home, and where they had received great kindness and hospitality, Walton accompanied them as far as Liverpool, was useful up to the last moment, and went down the Mersey with them in the tug, in charge of their smaller pieces of luggage, and especially of one dressing-bag of Mrs. Fletcher's that contained several thousand dollars' worth of diamonds and a quantity of other valuables. Each member of the party tipped him handsomely, and parted from him with effusion—almost tearfully, indeed, knowing that they should ne'er look upon his like again until they returned to Europe. As he was stepping on the tug, Mr. Fletcher said to him:

"What did you do with that bag—the bag, Walton?"

"If you please, sir, I gave it to Mrs. Fletcher."

"Oh, all right! Good-by, again!"

Ten minutes before, Mrs. Fletcher had made the same inquiry, and he had made the same response, except that—in the confusion of the moment, doubtless—he had substituted Mr. for Mrs. Fletcher. When they were well out to sea, Kate asked her husband what he had done with her bag, and, after a long discussion, ending in a quarrel, they concluded that there had

been some dreadful mistake, which Walton would be sure to rectify, and that they must telegraph as soon as they reached New York.

Is it necessary to say that the Fletchers never got back that bag? and, after much telegraphing and writing and the employment of the best detective talent, they traced Walton only as far as Spain and found that the dignified, able, incomparable "perfect treasure" was a ticket-of-leave man! Before entering the Fletchers' service he had been for two years in the service of an English officer, who thought as highly of him as they had.

"I shall never get over it, never!" exclaimed Jenny. "The foundations of society are completely broken up for me. I wouldn't trust Cardinal Newman now, or Mr. Gladstone, or Charles Francis Adams!"

Five years later, Mr. and Mrs. Job Ketchum, settled in their luxurious home in Kalsing, Michigan, received word that their English friend, Sir Robert Heathcote, was soon to make a tour of the United States, accompanied by several traveling companions. In his party, besides his nephew and his niece, Ethel, were his sister, Miss Noel, Mrs. Sykes, who had attached herself to the company without being urged, and Mr. Ramsay, a friend of Arthur's. The last mentioned, being a younger son with no special prospects, had decided to leave his mother country indefinitely and settle in the United States, where he understood fortunes could be acquired in the most rapid manner.

Mrs. Sykes was a very disagreeable person, who prided herself upon being as rude as possible to everybody with whom she came in contact; and Miss Noel was a sweet and gentle little woman who was entirely helpless without her faithful maid, Parsons, who had served her for many years.

Ethel was a typical English girl with a pleasant face, but without style, and with no idea how to wear her clothes. On one occasion, when descending the stairs with the agreeable consciousness of being well-dressed, she was confronted by her brother Arthur, who greeted her with the words: "What is the matter with you, Ethel? There is something wrong with you, but I can't tell what it is. You seem to wear the same things that American women wear, but you don't look as they do."

Mr. and Mrs. Ketchum had found their matrimonial ven-

ture a grand success, and Mabel, who adored her husband, had adopted American customs with unusual cheerfulness and amiability.

They had been blessed with a son and heir, whose name was Jared Ponsonby, the first part of the appellation being for Job's father, and the latter chosen in accordance with Mabel's wishes.

The Ketchum household comprised, besides the immediate family, the two mothers-in-law and an indigent German *fräulein*, who, being homeless and without friends, was included in their number by the kind-hearted Job.

When installing the two mothers in their home, Job talked the matter over with his wife in this wise:

"Your ma has had a hard life of it, and so has mine, and they both are getting old, and I am determined that they shall have everything they want. I've got plenty to do it with, and we'll just all live along together here as snug as sardines. I ain't a-going to make any difference between them, down to a paper of pins, and I know you ain't the woman to do it either."

In accordance with these views, Mr. Ketchum gave both ladies exactly the same allowance of pin-money, christened them facetiously "Mother and T'other," put one on his right hand and one on his left at table, and behaved with the most absolute fairness and the most admirable kindness in everything, from the greatest to the smallest question that came up. Mabel, who loved and admired her husband's generosity, imitated it as well, and never was less room given for jealousy or heart-burning in any household that ever was organized. Mr. Ketchum himself saw to their comforts—their bedroom fires, port, steaks, tonics, and what not—and Mrs. Ketchum was an affectionate, respectful daughter to both alike, anxious to consult their tastes, anticipate their wishes, and obey their very distracting and somewhat imperious commands—for their advice and counsels were apt to take the latter shape.

A more complete and ideal paradise for two weary old women, who had been battling with poverty and misfortune respectively for sixty and sixty-five years, it would be impossible to conceive; yet, such is the perversity of human nature, neither of them was satisfied, happy, or particularly grateful. One

would have supposed that there was no room for the serpent to wriggle in, try as he might, yet he was there, in envy and jealousy, malice and all uncharitableness, pride and love of dominion. All Mr. Ketchum's thoughtfulness, generosity, and benefactions were poisoned to each by the thought that the other shared them. Did he bring home a box of particularly fine grapes for Mrs. Vane, that lady was certain that its counterpart was reserved for her rival. Did he surprise his mother by sending her up a handsome silk dress of superior quality, she knew quite well that another dress had been cut from the same piece for Mrs. Vane. And so the honest fellow got but tepid thanks, and went delicately, like King Agag, fearing to tread on one or the other of the sensitive plants, whose "feelings" would hardly bear breathing upon, though they had small care for the feelings of others. And Mabel was ever gentle and good and patient, yet the two foolish women squabbled over everything that came up, and made themselves very ridiculous and very miserable. The usual attitude of the belligerents was one of ill-repressed sniffs and sneers; the warfare was illogical and deathless, though rarely did it find vent in open outbreaks. These, when they came, occurred always when Mr. Ketchum's restraining influence was removed, for, with all his indulgence, he was emphatically master of his own house, and could, as he expressed it, "put his foot down," indeed, plant both feet firmly and squarely and stamp on other feet that got in his way. Once at table, when Mrs. Ketchum, senior, had openly taunted Mrs. Vane with being a dependent on her son's bounty, and Mrs. Vane had taken the ground that the third cousin of an English earl conferred an honor in accepting anything at the hands of social inferiors who were only too glad to purchase good blood at any price, Mr. Ketchum had got into one of his rare rages, and had frightened them so thoroughly and rebuked them so sternly that for a month afterward all was as beautifully calm and bright as moonlight in the tropics.

The English travelers arrived in New York and went at once to a hotel, not kept on the European plan, where Sir Robert faced "that great American fountain of absolute authority and irresponsible power," the clerk, with the unconscious courage that animates a boy in his first battle. He did not

know the danger, and so knew no fear, and had no idea of what he was doing, when, after saying particularly that he wished a room with a southern exposure, and being assigned one with a northern exposure—a fact ascertained by taking his bearings with a pocket compass as soon as he was installed—he marched down-stairs and boldly rebuked the gorgeous young man with the solitaire pin who had betrayed his confidence, and who, paralyzed perhaps by such audacity, forgot either to threaten or to command, but called a servant and bade him "take that there lord's things up to thirty-six from twenty-four, and be quick about it, too."

The visitors were greeted cordially and entertained royally by many friends, both old and new, much to the appreciation of all members of the party, with the exception of Mrs. Sykes, who thought she was being run after, and conducted herself accordingly. She made the rudest remarks imaginable at every opportunity, and insulted her hosts and hostesses indiscriminately, much to the mortification of her companions. On one occasion, while the party was being entertained at the pretty country home of Mrs. DeWitt, who before her marriage was Jenny Meredith, Mrs. Sykes was seen to be staring fixedly at a handsome silver épergne on the table near her.

"Dear me!" said she, alertly. "Can that be a crest that I see?"

"On the épergne?" asked Mrs. DeWitt. "Yes. My husband's. An old family piece, which has quite recently come into our possession through the kindness of a friend, who, strange to say, found it at a jeweler's in Charleston, and rescued it just in time to prevent its being melted down and converted into teaspoons."

"An old piece, you say? How very extraordinary! I thought Americans had no grandfathers," said Mrs. Sykes, restoring her glass to its place, her brows still keeping the arch of surprise.

Mrs. DeWitt flushed, and was about to retaliate, but, remembering that she was in her own house, stopped. She caught Miss Noel's uneasy look, and felt repaid for her self-control.

Among Mrs. DeWitt's guests was a charming cousin of hers

from Baltimore, named Edith Bascome, who had inherited an equal share of the family beauty and was a close rival to Jenny in fascination and charm.

Heathcote, who never had seen any girl who could fill the place of Jenny Meredith in his affections, was much pleased with Miss Bascome and immediately decided to visit Baltimore.

After seeing New York, the travelers visited Washington, where they were much astonished at many of the American customs; and when on one occasion Miss Noel was attending the President's reception, and discovered her maid Parsons in the line ahead of her, her amazement and indignation knew no bounds. She ordered the offending Parsons home at once, and was strongly tempted to discharge her on the spot, but after further consideration decided to pardon her, as it was her first offense.

After "doing" the capital, Sir Robert and his party set out for the West and in due time arrived at their destination, the hospitable home of Mr. and Mrs. Ketchum. On the journey the visitors had their first introduction to a sleeping-car, and did not find the experience one of unalloyed pleasure. One of their fellow-travelers was a loquacious man, who retailed his entire family history to a neighbor in a loud tone.

This was too much for the endurance of Mrs. Sykes, and after bouncing about in fury behind her curtains for a while she suddenly sent forth these words in a stentorian voice, with an aggressively British accent:

"Would you be good enough, whoever you are and wherever you are, to keep yourself and your affairs to yourself, and allow an English lady, who doesn't care a pin about you, or your wife, or your daughter, or anything connected with you, to go to sleep?" She thought of and spoke for herself alone, but so admirably expressed the general exasperation that a loud laugh followed.

The stay with Mr. and Mrs. Ketchum proved most enjoyable, and when it was completed the travelers continued their tour, visited California and New Orleans, and took a trip to Havana.

While staying at the Ketchums' Mr. Ramsay progressed rapidly in his friendship with Miss Bijou Brown, a very pretty

and wealthy young girl whom he had met in New York. He left her without declaring himself, much to her mortification and grief; but she learned later, when he returned to her after receiving a legacy from his aunt, that his silence was caused by his impecuniousness, and she accordingly forgave him.

Arthur Heathcote found Baltimore and Miss Bascome even more fascinating than he had anticipated, and when the latter informed him that she would never live in England, he made up his mind to make his future home in the United States. Sir Robert purchased an attractive old estate in Virginia which had greatly taken his fancy, and put it into the hands of his nephew, who planned there an ideal home in which to install his bride.

The visiting party being now depleted of two of its members, and also being minus Mrs. Sykes, who had forsaken it, set sail for its native land, carrying back most delightful memories of the American trip.

WILLIAM BECKFORD

(England, 1759–1844)

VATHEK: AN ARABIAN TALE (1786)

This fantastic story, written in imitation of the *One Thousand and One Nights*, is not only an extraordinary story in itself but was written in extraordinary circumstances. The author, a wealthy, highly cultivated, and much traveled young Englishman of twenty, wrote it at one sitting: "It took me," he says, "three days and two nights of hard labor. I never took my clothes off the whole time. The severe application made me very ill." *Vathek* was originally written in French, and was so admirable in style and idiom that it was considered by many the work of a Frenchman. It was first published in 1786, as a translation from the French, said to have been made by Dr. Henley, who also supplied the notes. The original edition in the British Museum, however, does not bear the title *Vathek;* it is simply entitled: "An Arabian Tale from an unpublished *MS.*, with notes, etc." (London, 1786). The original French copy was published at Lausanne in 1787. Lord Byron said of it: "As an Eastern tale, even Rasselas must bow before it; the Happy Valley will not bear a comparison with the Hall of Eblis." One critic, fifty years after the publication of *Vathek*, said: "In the Hall of Eblis, the figure of Soliman on his throne, showing his heart enveloped in flame; the impressive sentences he utters; the awful forms of the pre-Adamite kings; the innumerable multitudes whirled around in eternal motion, each hand pointing to the heart on fire, leave an impression on the mind more human, more startling and awakening than any drawn from the hell of Milton."

THE Caliph Vathek, grandson of Haroun-al-Raschid, possessed a pleasing and majestic figure, but when angry one of his eyes became so terrible that no one could bear its glance. He was exceedingly generous, and his greatest pleasures were woman and wine. He was especially addicted to the pleasures of the table, and denied that it was necessary to make a hell of this world to make a paradise of the next. In magnificence he surpassed his predecessors: he considered his father's palace far too cramped, and therefore added five palatial wings for the gratification of each of the senses. In the first of these The Eternal, or Unsatiating Banquet, tables

were kept spread with the most exquisite dainties and liquors. The Temple of Melody, or The Nectar of the Soul, was inhabited by the most skilful musicians and admired poets of the day, who provided perpetual entertainment. The Delight of the Eyes, or The Support of Memory, was a vast museum. The Palace of Perfumes, or The Incentive to Pleasure, consisted of various halls in which all the perfumes in the world were kept burning in golden censers and torches, and aromatic lamps flamed day and night. This was surrounded by an immense garden, planted with every known fragrant flower and herb. The Retreat of Mirth, or The Dangerous, was inhabited by women as beautiful and seductive as the houris.

Notwithstanding Vathek's love of everything that ministered to the senses, he was a great student and lover of the sciences, particularly the occult. He was fond of arguing with the doctors, and when the zealots opposed him he persecuted them in return, so as to have reason on his side, at least.

Mahomet naturally viewed the irreligious conduct of his vicegerent on earth with some indignation; but he told the genii to leave him alone and see how far he would go before punishing him. He told them to help Vathek to complete the tower which he had begun for the purpose of insolently penetrating the secrets of heaven. The result was that for one cubit the workmen raised in the daytime two were added in the night, and this immensely tickled Vathek's vanity. He was extremely proud, finally, when he mounted the fifteen hundred steps and surveyed the entire city of Samarah spread below him. On the summit he spent many nights in astrological studies, and learned that he was to have the most extraordinary adventures accomplished by a wonderful personage from an unknown country. He made a proclamation, therefore, that every stranger should be brought into his presence. Soon afterward a hideous being arrived whose appearance terrified the guards that brought him into the Caliph's presence. He had with him marvelous wares; but what particularly attracted the Caliph's admiration were some sabers that dealt automatically a blow at the person they were desired to strike. The dazzling blades were engraved with unknown characters. He told the stranger to take what gold he wanted for them,

and then asked him whence he came. To all inquiries, he showed his hideous teeth and laughed horribly. He was ordered to prison. When Vathek went to dinner, he was so disturbed that he could eat only thirty-two dishes of the three hundred that daily supplied his table. His anger was further inflamed in the morning when, on visiting the prison, he found it empty and the guards dead. His mother, Carathis, who was an adept in astrology, did her best to comfort him, and suggested that proclamation should be made that anyone who would decipher the inscriptions on the swords should be richly rewarded, and that those who failed should have their beards burned off. News of the stranger was to be rewarded with fifty beautiful slaves and fifty jars of Kirmith apricots. Though this made their mouths water, the Caliph's subjects were not able to gratify their longings. Finally an old man appeared who deciphered the inscriptions; but the next day, on examining the swords, he found that the words had changed to those of totally different import; and thereafter Vathek noticed that the characters changed daily. Though he consulted the stars from the top of his tower, he gained no satisfaction. He lost his appetite, ceased to administer justice, and shut up the Palace of the Five Senses. Sometimes his attendants would carry him to a high flower-carpeted plateau within a few miles of the city to breathe the pure air and drink at the four fountains there. One day while there the hideous stranger reappeared and gave him a potion that immediately restored his health and spirits. Vathek took him home, opened the palace, and magnificently entertained him.

At the divan next morning Vathek received a message from Carathis saying that the stars portended danger, and that the potion was probably poison. The stranger's mocking laughter so enraged Vathek that he kicked him off the steps of the throne, in which act he was imitated by all the bystanders. The stranger, being short and plump, immediately rolled himself up into a ball and was kicked through the streets of the city by the whole population, headed by Vathek, out to the plain of Catoul and into the valley at the foot of the mountain of the four fountains, where he disappeared over a precipice into an abyss. On the edge of the precipice Vathek ordered his tents

to be pitched and spent many nights in vigils. At length a terrible voice addressed him: "Wouldst thou devote thyself to me? adore the terrestrial influences, and abjure Mahomet. On these conditions I will bring thee to the Palace of Subterranean Fire. There shalt thou behold in immense depositories the treasures which the stars have promised thee, and which will be conferred by those intelligences whom thou shalt thus render propitious. It was from thence I brought my sabers, and it is there that Soliman-Ben-Daoud reposes, surrounded by the talismans that control the world."

Vathek promised, and immediately the earth opened, and Vathek saw the stranger standing with a golden key in his hand before an ebony portal. Before admitting Vathek, however, he demanded the blood of fifty beautiful children as a libation. Vathek returned to Samarah and organized a splendid festival on the plain, during which he managed to throw the necessary number of children into the gulf. To his amazement, though, the chasm immediately closed against him, and he was left alone to the execration of his subjects. It required the utmost exertions of his vizier, Morakanabad, and Bababalouk, the head of the eunuchs, to get him to his palace in safety. Carathis somewhat appeased the angry crowd by haranguing them from her window, while Bababalouk showered Vathek's stores of gold upon them. By a secret passage Vathek reached his tower and ascended to the top, where he was joined by Carathis, who there built an altar for sacrifice to the subterranean genii. A pile of mummies' bones and vases of serpents' oil was raised to a height of twenty cubits. The blaze terrified the inhabitants of Samarah, who broke into the tower with buckets of water to quench the flames. Those who reached the top, half suffocated, were seized by Carathis's mutes and negresses and thrown into the flames, which immediately changed from swarthy crimson to bright rose, while mephitic vapors changed to others of most exquisite fragrance, and the marble columns rang with harmonious sounds. Carathis was delighted at the success of her sacrifice. A table appeared loaded with dainties, and on it was an urn containing a parchment, on which was written the satisfaction of the infernal powers and a command for Vathek to set out to Istakhar

with his wives, slaves, richest laden camels and most magnificent litters. The document read: "Beware how thou enterest any dwelling on thy route; or thou shalt feel the effects of my anger." Vathek and his mother then caroused, ironically toasting Mahomet and blaspheming Balaam's Ass, the Dog of the Seven Sleepers, and all the other animals in Paradise.

At this juncture, an embassy returned from Mecca bringing with it a precious besom used to sweep the sacred Kaaba. Vathek received the pious moullahs with the utmost indignity. On taking leave of Vathek, Carathis expressed her desire to visit the subterranean palace, and she said: "There is nothing so pleasing as retiring to caverns: my taste for dead bodies and everything like mummy is decided; and, I am confident, thou wilt see the most exquisite of their kind. Forget me not, then, but the moment thou art in possession of the talismans which are to open the way to the mineral kingdoms, and the center of the earth itself, fail not to despatch some trusty genius to take me and my cabinet; for the oil of serpents I have pinched to death will be a pretty present to the Giaour."

On the night before this, Vathek had ascended the tower with his mother to see whether everything was propitious: the planets appeared in their most favorable aspects. They supped gaily on the roof, and during the repast Vathek thought he heard shouts of laughter in the sky, which inspired the fullest assurance.

At moonrise the great standard of the Califat was displayed: twenty thousand lances shone around it, and the Caliph, treading royally on the cloth of gold, ascended his litter amid general acclamation.

For three days all went well; but on the fourth angry skies inclined Vathek to take shelter in Ghulchissar, whose governor greeted him with refreshments and invitations. However, he consulted his tablets and refused. He sent for his geographers, but the maps were all soaked and nobody knew which way to turn; so, with curses and mutterings of the bowstring for his useless advisers, he determined to cross the heights under guidance of a peasant, who undertook to bring him to Rocnabad in four days. The wailings and shrieks of the eunuchs and the women at the terrors of the precipices did

not deter him, nor did a terrible tempest. Worse was to come, however, for Vathek was aroused in his capacious cushioned litter by Bababalouk, who cried: "Misfortune is arrived at its height; wild beasts, who entertain no more reverence for your sacred person than for a dead ass, have beset your camels and their drivers; thirty of the most richly laden are already become their prey, as well as your confectioners, your cooks and purveyors; and unless our holy Prophet should protect us, we have all eaten our last meal."

This was too much: everybody, including the ladies, had to seize torches. Vathek himself, with a thousand blasphemies, was compelled to touch with his sacred feet the naked earth. One of the cedar forests took fire, which was communicated to the ladies' litters, and there was great lamentation when the women had to descend and expose themselves to the vulgar gaze. One of Vathek's Ethiopian wives (he was catholic in his tastes) shouldered her lord like a sack of dates and carried him out of danger.

When the tents were finally pitched and Vathek called for his evening meal, nothing was forthcoming. All the provisions and cooking utensils had been lost. Those delicate cakes baked in silver ovens for his royal mouth, those rich manchets, amber comfits, flagons of Shiraz wine, porcelain vases of snow, and grapes from the banks of the Tigris, were all lost. Bababalouk could present nothing but roasted wolf, vultures *à la daube*, acrid herbs, rotten truffles, boiled thistles. In the morning his diet stimulated Vathek to imprecations against the Giaour and some soothing expressions toward Mahomet. He was in a desolate gorge, with no help in sight. The timely arrival of two dwarfs from the Emir Fakreddin, with a present of fruits and offers of hospitality, gladdened his heart. Before their address was finished, the fruits had disappeared. As for Vathek, his piety increased, and in the same breath he recited his prayers and called for the Koran and sugar. However, he paled on consulting his tablets, on which Carathis had written: "Beware of puny messengers."

Nevertheless, he determined to accept the hospitality of Fakreddin, who soon arrived and conducted Vathek to his magnificent palace. The ladies were taken into the harem and

delightfully entertained by the Emir's daughter, Nouronihar, who was as sprightly as an antelope and full of wanton gayety. She assisted the mischievous ladies to give poor Bababalouk a good ducking in the bath, and left him there vainly seeking an exit till the morning. The Emir gave a great festival in honor of the Caliph, which was attended by all the holy men of the neighborhood, and there Vathek saw and was deeply smitten by the charms of Nouronihar, who was betrothed to her cousin, Gulchenrouz, an effeminate boy of her own age. On her way home in the moonlight, Nouronihar got separated from her eunuch escort and her maidens, and was attracted to a grotto in the mountains that was brilliantly lighted. It was decorated with the appendages of royalty: diadems and heron feathers, all sparkling with carbuncles. After soft music, a voice asked: "For what monarch are these torches kindled, this bath prepared, and these habiliments which belong to the talismanic powers?" "For the charming daughter of Fakreddin," another voice replied. "What? For that trifler, who consumes her time with a giddy child? Can she be amused with such empty toys, whilst he who is destined to enjoy the treasures of the pre-Adamite sultans is inflamed with love?" "For her? No! she will be wise enough to answer that passion alone that can aggrandize her glory. Then all the riches this place contains, as well as the carbuncle of Giamschid, shall be hers." "You judge right, and I haste to Istakhar to prepare the Palace of Subterranean Fire for the reception of the bridal pair."

Nouronihar awoke in her father's harem, and found everybody in despair at having missed her. The next day she received a visit from Vathek with much graciousness. Fakreddin appealed to Vathek to respect the laws of hospitality, and, when he found that his remonstrances were of no avail, he gave Nouronihar and Gulchenrouz a drug which produced a death-like trance; he then held a splendid funeral, meanwhile sending the pair to a hidden lake in the hills, where they were tended by the two dwarfs, who told them that they were now in Paradise.

Vathek was in despair. He renounced the perfidious Giaour and supplicated the pardon of Mahomet, and the Emir con-

gratulated himself on having performed so admirable a conversion. Vathek visited Nouronihar's tomb, and declared his intention of doing so daily.

One day the adventurous Nouronihar scaled the rocks around the lake and met the disconsolate Vathek, and yielded to his entreaties. He left the Emir's palace and pitched his tents in a neighboring valley, where Bababalouk supplied him with every luxury that could please his palate and Nouronihar delighted him with her songs and love.

His neglected Dilara, now sheltered by Fakreddin, sent messengers to Carathis, informing her of present conditions. Vathek's mother immediately mounted her great camel, Alboufaki, and, attended only by her one-eyed slaves, the hideous Nerkes and the relentless Cafour, she departed, telling the Vizier to fleece the people well in her absence, for she would need large sums. Alboufaki inhaled malignant fogs with delight, and was glad to stop at a miasmatic marsh for Carathis and her two negresses to cull venomous plants for the benefit of whosoever might retard the expedition to Istakhar. At dusk, Alboufaki stopped and stamped so that Carathis knew they were near a cemetery, and on examination she discovered two thousand graves, and determined to consult the ghouls who must haunt it, supplying them with fresh provisions in the bodies of her two guides. Having obtained the information she required, she proceeded; and, on the sixth day, Vathek was awakened by the rough trot of Alboufaki. After a stormy interview between mother and son, Vathek consented to pursue his original quest, only stipulating that he should be accompanied by his beloved Nouronihar, who was "enamored of carbuncles, especially that of Giamschid." The latter dropped a tender tear over the memory of Gulchenrouz, which aroused the jealousy of Vathek, who told the tale to his mother. Carathis then retired to her tent, where her negresses informed her that Alboufaki, in search of some sufficiently venomous moss, had run across some blue fish in a lake. Carathis immediately proceeded thither and pronounced incantations, whereupon the fish supplied her with the desired information. She discovered the retreat of Gulchenrouz, and during a battle between the negresses and the dwarfs, the boy escaped and was picked

up by a good old genius, who had also rescued the fifty little victims which the impiety of Vathek had devoted to the voracity of the cruel Giaour in the horrible chasm. The genius brought them all up in nests higher than the clouds, and fixed his own abode in a larger nest, from which he had driven the rocs that had built it.

The enraged Carathis returned to vent her spleen upon Vathek and Nouronihar; but in the evening the sky toward Samarah turned fiery red; and, on consulting her magic instruments, she found that a great rebellion had broken out at Samarah and that her wonderful tower was invested. Before returning, therefore, in hot haste she sought her son and conjured him to strike tent at once and set forward, because, though he had broken the conditions of the parchment, she was not yet without hope; "for it cannot be denied that thou hast violated to admiration the laws of hospitality by seducing the daughter of the Emir, after having partaken of his bread and his salt. Such a conduct cannot but be delightful to the Giaour; and if, on thy march, thou canst signalize thyself by an additional crime, all will still go well and thou shalt enter the palace of Soliman in triumph. Adieu! Alboufaki and my negresses are waiting at the door!"

The Caliph wished his mother a prosperous journey, and finished his supper. At midnight he broke camp, and in four days reached the spacious valley of Rocnabad, where he was welcomed by a colony of pious santons. Suspecting that their oratories might be deemed a habitation by the Giaour, he ordered them to be leveled and the gardens devastated. A deputation of the moullahs, sheiks, cadis, and imans of Shiraz arrived with presents, and with an invitation to visit their city and mosques. The presents were accepted, and, in order to make sure that the dignitaries should retire from the Caliph's presence deferentially backward, they were bound on their asses with their faces to their tails, and driven with nettles out of the Caliph's presence. Two days later, the mountains of Istakhar came into view, and the Caliph and Nouronihar were unable to repress their transports. The good genii now hastened to Mahomet in the seventh heaven, and begged him to prevent Vathek's impending ruin at the hand of the dives.

Mahomet indignantly replied that Vathek richly deserved retribution, but he was willing to allow them one more effort. One of them, therefore, assumed the form of a shepherd, and on the slope of a hill played pathetic melody on his flute. His music melted the hearts of the whole caravan. Even Vathek and his partner felt remorse for their misdeeds, and all approached the shepherd, who reproved Vathek in the severest terms and warned him that this was his last hour of grace, at the same time exhorting him to repent and make amends. Vathek, however, hardened his heart, and pressed forward with Nouronihar, although most of his followers deserted him. Finally the pair, alone, arrived at the foot of a vast staircase, which they mounted and saw before them an inscription in fiery letters on the darkness to the effect that though Vathek had violated the conditions of the parchment, yet in view of his other services Eblis would permit the portals of his palace to be opened, and the subterranean fire to receive him into the number of its adorers.

The rock yawned, revealing a staircase of polished marble, down which the pair hastened. At the bottom, before a vast portal of ebony, they were welcomed by the Giaour, before whose golden key the doors flew open. Vathek and Nouronihar were amazed to find themselves in a vast hall with a vaulted roof supported by rows upon rows of columns and arcades extending into infinite distances. The pavement was strewn with gold dust and saffron, exhaling overpowering odors. As they passed along, they noticed an infinity of censers in which ambergris and aloes-wood were burning. Tables spread with rich viands and every kind of wine in crystal vases stood between the columns, and a throng of genii of both sexes were dancing lasciviously to barbarous strains. A vast multitude incessantly passed by, holding their hands over their hearts, pale as death and taking no notice of one another. Some stalked slowly along, some rushed about shrieking with agony, some grinding their teeth in fury foamed more frantically than the wildest maniac. They all avoided each other. The Giaour would answer no questions, but hurried his charges along. At length they entered, through long curtains brocaded with crimson and gold, a vast tabernacle hung with leopard-skins. An

infinity of bearded elders and armored afrits were prostrate before an eminence, on the top of which upon a globe of fire sat the dread Eblis. He was youthful in appearance, but his noble features seemed to have been corroded with malignant vapors. His eyes were full of pride and despair; his hair resembled that of an angel of light; an iron scepter was in his hand. Vathek was daunted; Nouronihar was greatly interested. Eblis welcomed the creatures of clay: "Enjoy whatever this palace affords—the treasures of the pre-Adamite sultans, their fulminating sabers, and those talismans that compel the dives to open the subterranean expanses of the mountain of Kaf." Everything was open for their inspection.

Eagerly following their guide, they reached a vast domed hall with fifty bronze doors in the walls. Here lay the fleshless forms of the pre-Adamite kings, who still retained enough life to be conscious of their condition. With their hands on their hearts they gazed upon one another. At their feet were inscribed stories of their exploits, their power, their pride, and their crimes. Highest of all, and immediately under the dome, lay Soliman-Ben-Daoud. A range of brazen vases surrounded the elevation. "Remove the covers," said the Giaour to Vathek, "and avail thyself of the talismans which will break asunder all these gates of bronze and render thee master of the treasures contained within, and of the spirits that guard them."

Vathek was about to obey, when Soliman addressed him and recited the glories, pleasures, and crimes of his career and his present torments. Vathek was horrified to see that Soliman's heart was in flames, and reproached the Giaour for having brought him there, calling on Mahomet for mercy.

The Giaour replied: "Know, miserable Prince! thou art now in the abode of vengeance and despair. Thy heart also will be kindled like those of the other votaries of Eblis. A few days are allotted thee previous to this fatal period: employ them as thou wilt; recline on these heaps of gold; command the infernal potentates; range, at thy pleasure, through these immense subterranean domains: no barrier shall be shut against thee. As for me, I have fulfilled my mission: I now leave thee to thyself." At these words he vanished.

Hand in hand the couple tottered from the fatal hall.

Every portal opened and the dives fell prostrate at their approach. Every reservoir of riches was open to them, but they felt neither curiosity, pride, nor avarice. Apathetically they listened to the music and gazed on the banquet. They wandered from chamber to chamber, hall to hall, and gallery to gallery, all traversed by beings in vain search of repose and consolation. They awaited in dread suspense the moment that should render them to each other the like objects of terror. Occasionally also they reproached each other. Finally Vathek ordered an afrit to fetch Carathis, as the author of all his woes. When she arrived on the back of the groaning afrit, Vathek reproached her for her teachings. She informed him of the vengeance she had wreaked on Samarah before leaving. Carathis then entered the dome of Soliman, opened the vases, seized the talismans, and penetrated into the most secret recesses of the realm of Eblis. Nothing appalled her fearless soul. Even when Eblis confronted her, she was not daunted. She even attempted to dethrone one of the Solimans, to usurp his place, when she was halted by a voice from the abyss of death, proclaiming: "All is accomplished!" At that moment, she laid her right hand upon her heart, which had become a receptacle of eternal fire. At the same moment Vathek and Nouronihar were struck. Their hearts also took fire, and they recoiled from one another with looks of the most furious distraction. All plunged into the cursed multitude, there to wander in an eternity of unabating anguish.

CUTHBERT BEDE

(EDWARD BRADLEY)

(England, 1827–1889)

THE ADVENTURES OF MR. VERDANT GREEN (1853)

"Cuthbert Bede" was the pseudonym of the rector of Denton in Huntingtonshire, although he was not appointed to the living until six years after the publication of his first book. He wrote several stories of a mildly humorous nature, but none achieved the popular success of that which is presented here.

ROM earliest times, as you may find by referring to the unpublished volume of Burke's *Landed Gentry*, the Verdant Greens have been regarded as highly respectable.

To be sure, none of the Greens has ever attained to great eminence, nor has any one ever amassed an unusual amount of wealth. In fact, they have from generation to generation been good-natured dupes of more astute minds. In the comedy of the monkey and the catspaw, they have always been ready to assume the *rôle* of the guileless cat, and there has rarely been a generation that did not number among its members a number of burned paws.

Turn again to the chronicles of which I have spoken and you will find this entry: "VERDANT GREEN, of the Manor Green, Co. Warwick, Gent., who married Mary, only surviving child of Samuel Sappey, Esq., of Sapcot Hall, Co. Salop; by whom he has issue, one son, and three daughters: Mary, VERDANT, Helen, Fanny."

The Manor Green was situated in one of the loveliest spots in all Warwickshire; a county rich in all that constitutes the picturesqueness of a true English landscape. Here Verdant passed the days of his youth, and here he was petted and spoiled,

as much as his naturally sweet temper would allow, by the assiduous attentions of mother, sisters, and a doting father.

Verdant had no playmate of his own age, and his mother had a horror of public schools, so he never was allowed away from her apron-strings, although the rector, Mr. Larkyns, had a son who was being educated at a public school, and intimated that such a training was just what Verdant needed.

Verdant thought himself lucky to escape going to such a place of horrors as a public school, for Master Charley had told him many a tale of the way the second master would find out your tenderest places when you were licked for a false quantity, and of the jolly "mills" the boys used to have with town "cads," who would lie in wait for a fellow and half kill him if they caught him alone; and of the fun it was to make a junior form fellow fag for you and do all your dirty work.

So Verdant came to the age of eighteen without ever having fired a gun or driven a cricket-ball, or having learned to swim or to ride, or to do anything that a girl should not do.

But if the Greens did not realize that their son was in a fair way to become a milksop, the rector did, and, wishing to save the boy from such a fate, he had several talks with Pater Green in which he discussed the advisability of sending Verdant to Oxford, where he would mix with other boys and learn something of the world. Mr. Green finally allowed himself to be swayed by this counsel, and, to the great regret and trepidation of Mrs. Green, it was decided to send Verdant down.

Brazenface will be a good name to call the college selected for Verdant, and the evening of the day of his arrival (accompanied by his father) saw him ensconced in small but comfortable quarters, with a scout in the person of Robert Filcher to do his errands, and several amiable students in agreeable contiguity.

The next morning Mr. Green returned to Manor Green, and Verdant realized that now he was an Oxford MAN. He immediately looked up his old acquaintance, Charley Larkyns, who had been at Oxford some time.

Mr. Charles Larkyns had sporting tendencies, as was shown by the ornaments of his room, the foils, boxing-gloves,

cricket-bats, tandem whips, antlers, pictures of footlight favorites, and other articles that lent themselves to manly decoration. There were also one or two suspicious-looking boxes labeled "Colorado," "Regalia," "Lukotilla."

There was no doubt in Verdant's mind when he timidly entered the room that Charley actually smoked, for a perfumed cloud was issuing from his lips as he lolled on a couch in the negligé attire of dressing-gown and slippers, with his pink striped shirt comfortably open at the neck.

Opposite him sat a gentleman who was draining the last drop from a pewter mug, and on a table between the two was another beer-mug and a bottle of soda-water.

At first Charley did not recognize Verdant, but when he did his reception was cordial, and he introduced him to "Mr. Smalls," the gentleman who had formerly had Verdant's room.

Both men were astonished to hear that Verdant never had smoked and advised him to adopt the habit if he intended to be a deep reader, as it was a great help to study.

A walk was proposed, and Verdant was filled full of "information" concerning the colleges, the dons, the proctors, and the students, that was provocative of much amusement to the congenial pair of friends, and taken as gospel by the sapling.

Upon his return to his rooms the youth wrote a long letter to his mother, expatiating on the patient kindness of Charley and Mr. Smalls in explaining so much that was necessarily new and strange to him. He also (by the advice of Charley) asked for a certificate that he had been vaccinated, as that young gentleman had intimated that he could not pass his "Little Go" unless he were provided with such a paper.

There was no denying that there were pleasures connected with college life, and so far Verdant was rather glad that he had come down. The evening after his meeting with Charley Larkyns he attended a "smoker" at the rooms of Mr. Smalls. There was much smoking and many drinks of many kinds, and to his own astonishment Verdant soon found himself with a cigar in his mouth and a glass of milk-punch in his hand.

Bashful as he ordinarily was, it was not long before he was induced to sing, and in a weak voice he caroled to them, "I Dreamt I Dwelt in Marble Halls." As he sang his utterance

thickened, but he was delighted with the vigorous way in which all joined in the chorus, and after a time bashfulness gave place to assurance and he was easily prevailed upon to address the company.

His speech was remarkable for the way in which the consonants became mixed and were carried away by the vowels.

After making a few unintelligible sounds, Verdant felt his knees suddenly give way, and with a benevolent smile he disappeared under the table.

Two kind friends put "Giglamps" (as he had been nicknamed) to bed, and thus ended his first convivial evening.

He did not care to go to chapel next morning. His scout, using an agreeable euphemism, told him that he had been "pleasant" the night before, but when one of his friends, little Mr. Bouncer, came in to see how he was, he told him, to his intense mortification, that he had been beastly drunk. Mr. Bouncer, who was a jolly little man, always bent on turning things upside down, if it were possible, assured him that he had been all right until Mr. Slowcoach, his tutor, had joined the party.

Mr. Slowcoach! To think that he should have seen him in that condition! Of course Mr. Slowcoach had not been near the scene of the festivities, but the mischievous Bouncer had alarmed poor Verdant with his insinuations.

"You see what brought him was your throwing empty beer-bottles at his window. That would have a tendency to arouse his interest. And then when he came in, you remember, you wanted to have a polka with him—and he doesn't dance," said the incorrigible joker.

Visions of expulsion chased one another through Verdant's throbbing head. A way out of it was kindly suggested by Mr. Bouncer, who told Verdant that if he wrote an extremely penitent and contrite note to Slowcoach, the tutor might relent enough to keep the matter from reaching the ears of higher authorities. The note was written and handed to Bouncer, and as Verdant was not expelled he felt very grateful to his kind friend.

The usual routine of lectures and study followed their due course, and Verdant's innocent ways, while tempting to the

mischievous, at the same time won him many friends, who could not help liking the gullible fellow, but who relaxed not one jot of their efforts to hoax him.

Under Charley Larkyns's tutelage Verdant ordered clothing of a more fashionable cut and ran up a number of bills in the furnishing of his rooms with engravings and other ornaments. He also learned how it feels to be thrown by a horse, what it is to own a dog that cannot kill rats and finally runs away after you have paid an exorbitant sum for him, and in many ways added to his stock of an experience that somehow did not teach much discretion.

He could now smoke without evil consequences, and felt himself to be more of a man than his mother; and so the first term passed and he went home to his adoring relatives, where he posed as a devil of a fellow, shocked his maiden aunt, and made his father and mother feel that it was a wise move to send him to college, since he seemed to have learned so much.

Upon Verdant's return to the University, it became his pleasure to hoax freshmen even as he had been hoaxed, but it is doubtful whether any among them were quite as credulous as he had been. His gullibility was likely to pass into a college tradition.

He was now firm friends with Larkyns, Bouncer, Smalls, and a number of other genial men with kindred tastes, and life at college was not all a "grind."

One of the most memorable evenings of his second term was an occasion when he took part in a Town and Gown riot (against his will at the outset, but coached by excitement into becoming an adversary of some worth).

In this fight Larkyns *et al.* received the help of no less a person than the Putney Pet, a prize-fighter of prowess who had been hired for the occasion, and who had been induced to don a mortar-board, although he balked at the gown as being in the way.

Many were the cracked heads and tapped noses that evening, and when the fight was at its height the Rev. Thomas Tozer of the University took an involuntary part in it and was saved from a knock-out blow at the hands of a Townsman by the same Putney Pet.

Being a strict disciplinarian, Mr. Tozer had called the low-browed gentleman to task for appearing on the streets without his gown.

"I ax your pardon, guv'nor!" replied the Pet, deferentially, "I didn't so much care about the mortar-board, but I couldn't do nothin' nohow with the other thing, so I pocketed him; but some cove must have gone and prigged him, for he ain't here."

Owing to the darkness Mr. Tozer did not see the tale-telling features of the bruiser, and he angrily replied that he did not understand his foolish talk and would like him to confine himself to English.

Then the truth came out, and the pacified Mr. Tozer said: "Well, well! you have used your skill very much to our advantage, and displayed pugilistic powers not unworthy of the athletes and xystics of the noblest days of Rome. As a palestrite you would have gained palms in the gymnastic exercises of the Circus Maximus. And now, go home, sir, and resume your customary head-dress: and stay! here's five shillings."

This so pleased the somewhat mystified Pet that he handed the reverend gentleman one of his professional cards.

After the fight there was a jovial supper-party in the principal room at "The Roebuck," and the Pet was given a place of honor and toasted and cheered by all present in a manner to disperse the doubts of anyone as to undergraduate enthusiasm.

It is needless to say that the Rev. Mr. Tozer did not form one of this roistering company, but Verdant Green did, and enjoyed the occasion as well as any, in spite of the patch of brown paper, perfumed with vinegar, that indicated where he had met with punishment in the long-to-be-remembered fight between Town and Gown.

During his second term Verdant made adequate progress in his studies, but the outdoor sports interested him most, although candor compels the statement that he did not excel in one of them. His horseback rides always invited disaster, and disaster always accepted the invitation; his rowing was a sight for those whose risibles needed exercise; and altogether he continued to be the same guileless, amiable, lovable nincompoop that he was at the beginning of this veracious history.

At Christmas there were delightful doings down at Manor Green, for Charley Larkyns had invited little Bouncer down, and there were also two lovely girls from the north country, the sisters Honeywood.

Verdant found the younger, Miss Patty, to be quite the most adorable creature he had ever known, and, while Christmas holidays were always delightful, these Christmas holidays were made ever memorable by the advent of the rosy-cheeked girl from the northern borders.

The Christmas vacation passed all too quickly, and Verdant once more sought the classic shades of Oxford. Charley Larkyns was going in for a degree, so he burned oil at midnight more often than formerly; but neither Verdant nor Bouncer used their oil for studious purposes, and they contrived to have many a merry evening together. Verdant was still Green, but Green was not quite as verdant as he had been. He was never above learning, and as his learning was always attended by amusement on the part of the spectators, he always found those who were willing to coach him. So he learned to skate, and described many strange figures in the air rather than on the ice; he also kept up his horseback exercise, without ever being mistaken for a centaur.

After Easter vacation Verdant was fortunate enough to get through his "smalls," while Charley Larkyns won the Chancellor's prize for a Latin essay and the Newdigate prize for English verse.

But little Bouncer, in spite of an ingenious system of cards worn upon his person and decorated with answers to the questions in his examinations, was ignominiously "plucked," and his boisterous spirits were dampened for nearly a day.

Commemoration Day came in due time, and Verdant was chosen as prompter for Charley Larkyns when he came to deliver his prize poem; but luckily enough Charley did not need a prompter, for Verdant was far too nervous to render him any assistance.

After Commemoration came more vacation, and an event to which Verdant had looked forward for weeks—a visit to Honeywood Hall, in the County of Northumberland, where dwelt the adorable Patty. Not only were Verdant and his

sisters going, but Charley Larkyns and little Bouncer and his sister Fanny were of the party.

It was a merry company, and not the less merry for the presence of Bouncer; but with every revolution of the car-wheels Verdant's heart beat faster as he reflected that in a few hours he would gaze on the dearest face in all Christendom and feel the pressure of the most thrilling hand in the world. But with all his ardor, doubt and mistrust of himself kept steady pace. It was not likely that so fascinating a young woman as Patty would ever deign to look at him in any way save as a friend.

Oh, the delights and the tortures of first love! Verdant was in a heavenly hell from which he hardly dared wish to be delivered.

At last they reached Honeywood Hall, and he saw Patty, saw Charley take upon himself the cousinly privilege of kissing her, and then he himself shook hands with her—and was superlatively happy.

Many were the hospitalities lavished upon the guest from the South by the Northrons, but opportunity did not come for Verdant to be alone with Patty until one happy day when the bright sunshine was reflected in Miss Patty's bright-beaming face, and Mr. Verdant Green found himself wandering forth with her "all in the blue, unclouded weather."

Miss Patty sketched, and she had asked Verdant to accompany her to the ruined church of Lasthope, about two miles distant from the Hall.

She had made her outline of the scene, and was preparing to wash it in (conversing most entertainingly the while), when to Verdant's terror and amazement he saw a huge bull stealthily approaching the seated figure of the unconscious young lady.

And now, for the first time in his life, he proved that he was a man, after all. Quietly, with no indication of the fear he felt for her, he said to Patty: "Don't be frightened—there is no danger—but there is a bull coming toward us. Walk quietly to that gate, and don't let him see that you are afraid of him. I will take off his attention till you are safe at the gate, and then I can wade through the Swirl and get out of his reach."

Patty, though loath to leave her escort behind, was prevailed upon to seek a place of safety, and then Verdant, arming himself with a stone, watched his chance and hit the bull full in the nose. The indignant animal, which had been pursuing Patty, turned his attention to Verdant, but that young man, cool-headed for once, waited until the bull was almost on him and then threw his coat upon his horns. The bull, blinded by the coat, was temporarily checked, and while he made havoc with the garment, the delay enabled Verdant to reach the bank of the Swirl. But it is likely that the bull would have overtaken him had not Patty's cries brought farm laborers to the scene. They attacked the bull with spades, and in a short time he was subdued and led to the bull-house.

Verdant was Patty's deliverer, and as such was fully appreciated by her. She looked upon him as a Bayard who had chivalrously risked his life in behalf of a lady.

Most important in its bearing on Verdant's suit was an interview that he had with Patty as they sat on the trunk of an apple-tree that formed a natural seat about two feet from the ground, an excellent place, as Patty said, for the telling of secrets, being put to that use by her sister and herself.

Such pleasant contiguity made even the timid Verdant think that it was a time most propitious for him to say words of greater weight than any he had ever used lips to form.

She said: "It's very hot, don't you think?"

He answered: "How very odd. I was thinking the same."

"I think I shall take my hat off—it is so warm. Dear me! how stupid! the strings are in a knot."

"Let me see if I can untie them for you."

"Thanks, no, I can manage." (But she could not!)

He tried to help her, his fingers accidentally touched her chin, and he received a shock as from a highly charged electrical machine.

The conversation was for a little longer not particularly to the point. Verdant found it necessary to say "It's hot" more than once, and Patty said that it was pleasanter there than in the sun.

After a time he became bold enough to place his arm behind her in order to keep her from falling off the seat. She allowed

him to do this, and at last he said in a faltering tone, "I wonder how much you like me—very much?"

"Oh, I couldn't tell—how should I? What strange questions you ask. You saved my life; so of course I am very, very grateful, and I hope I shall always be your friend."

"Yes, I hope so indeed—always—and something more. Do you hope the same?"

"What do you mean? Hadn't we better go back to the house?"

"Not just yet—it's so cool here—at least, not cool exactly, but hot—pleasanter, that is—much pleasanter here. I always feel hot when I'm out-of-doors."

"Then we'd better go indoors."

"Pray don't—not yet—do stop a little longer."

And the hand that had been on the bough of the tree timidly seized Miss Patty's arm.

"But," said the young lady, as she felt the pressure of the hand, "but it's not necessary to hold me a prisoner."

"It's you that hold me a prisoner!" said Mr. Verdant Green, with a sudden burst of enthusiasm and blushes, and a great stress upon the pronouns.

And then, just as he was about to tell his love, there was a perfume of tobacco, and the horrid voice of Mr. Bouncer said:

"Holloa, Giglamps! Been looking for you everywhere. Luncheon's been on the table more than an hour, Miss Honeywood."

Of course Verdant took early opportunity to tell Bouncer how he had spoiled the most precious moment of his life, and of course the good-natured Bouncer was exceedingly sorry, but that opportunity was gone forever.

To Honeywood Hall came two unpleasant things not long after the episode on the tree-trunk: a Mr. Frederick Delaval and Jealousy. Delaval was a cousin of Patty's, but that fact, while it gave him a right to kiss her, need not have given him a right to monopolize her company quite as much as he did unless they pretty well understood each other.

Verdant was heart-broken, and yet was so frank that he could not hate the debonair Delaval, and speedily became very good friends with him.

At a picnic a gipsy read Miss Patty's fortune in such a manner and with so many veiled sayings that seemed to point directly at Delaval that Verdant was sure they were engaged, and he was betrayed into saying to Patty, who had rallied him on his seriousness and had asked him of what he was thinking, "I was thinking that Mr. Delaval had proposed and had been accepted."

Miss Patty looked confused and surprised.

"I see that it is so," he sighed, and his heart sank.

"How did you find out?" she replied. "It is a secret for the present, and we do not wish anyone to know of it."

"My dear Betty," said Frederick Delaval, who had waited for them to come up, "I am dying to tell you my fortune. I was with Miss Maxwell at the gipsy camp, and the old woman described her to me as my future wife. The fortune-teller was slightly on the wrong track, wasn't she?"

Frederick Delaval and Patty and her sister Kitty laughed, and Mr. Verdant Green also laughed in a very savage manner.

"My last hope is gone," thought Verdant. "I have now heard my fate from her own lips."

All hope seemed indeed to have gone. If English language meant anything, Patty was engaged to Frederick, and Verdant must go through life "remote, unfriended, solitary, slow."

But the fates were less disposed to laugh at the innocent young man than had been some of his college mates, and before the picnic was ended Verdant was rendered almost dizzy on learning that he and Patty had been having a game of cross-purposes and that the engagement of which he must not speak was that between Delaval and Patty's sister, Kitty.

And then—they were sitting shielded from the sun's rays under a tilt-cart, while one of the picnickers was singing numberless verses of an inane song—in this highly romantic position Verdant Green found the right words to declare his love, and Patty found bliss-bestowing words to say in return; and when the picnic party set out for home, Miss Patty Honeywood could exclaim with Schiller's heroine: "*Ich habe gelebt und geliebet!*"

The ordeal of asking Patty's papa was safely passed, and Verdant, on promising to wait two years, was allowed to become her *fiancé*.

While in the North, Verdant became an expert horseman and took many rides with the lady of his love. In fact, the term "milksop" never could be applied again to Verdant.

His further adventures at Oxford often took the form of episodes in which he acted as the dupe, but the bonds of friendship between him and his fellows were ever more firmly united, and at last he found himself taking his degree before them all, with lovely Patty witnessing his pride; and not long after this he traveled once more to the County of Northumberland, there to be united to Patty for life.

HENRY WARD BEECHER

(United States, 1813–1887)

NORWOOD (1867)

This story of *Village Life in New England* was its author's only novel. Mr. Beecher had been for several years previously to the Civil War a regular contributor to the *New York Ledger*, and when, at the close of the great conflict, he found himself at leisure to devote considerable time to literary work, he acceded to the request of Mr. Robert Bonner, proprietor and editor of the *Ledger*, to furnish him a serial story. As Mr. Beecher never had turned his attention to the production of fiction, the task seemed at first very difficult; but as the work progressed he became deeply interested in his theme, in the development of which he took great delight. *Norwood* was written mostly in Peekskill, New York, and its author denominated it "a summer-child, brought up among flowers and trees"; he asserted that there was not a single unpleasant memory connected with it. While the work was in preparation Mr. Beecher said of it: "I propose to make a story which shall turn, not so much on outward action as on certain mental and inward questions. I propose to delineate a high and noble man, trained to New England theology. . . . I propose introducing a full company of various New England characters, to give a real view of the inside of a New England town, its brewing thought, its inventiveness, its industry and enterprise, its education and shrewdness and tact."

URROUNDED by goodly hills, and nestling close to the Connecticut River, lay the town of Norwood with its few thousand inhabitants. It was a typical New England village, settled not many years after the landing of the Pilgrims, and retaining in large measure the manners and morals, customs and religion of its fathers.

The place was unusual for picturesqueness and beauty, and it would be safe to say that no fairer village ever glistened in the sunlight or hid itself under arching elms.

Abiah Cathcart, a lifelong resident of Norwood, was an honorable specimen of a New England farmer. He possessed great bodily strength, calmness, patience, and an inflexible will. From his parents he had received, in addition to a healthy

body, a sound judgment, habits of industry, a common-school education, and a good name.

At the age of eighteen, Abiah had "bought his time" of his father for two hundred dollars. These were considered liberal terms in the early 'thirties, when this took place, for a son's services for the three years before his majority were no small part of the working capital of a farm.

After leaving his father's house Abiah had hired out as a teamster, and by his faithful labor, thrift, and industry had soon become independent. He had married Rachel Liscomb, a girl of fine traits and sterling character, who made him an admirable wife.

At the time of his marriage, Abiah had purchased a large farm, which, on account of its deteriorated condition and dilapidated buildings, he had been able to secure at a very low price. After his purchase he had set to work to bring his property out of the state of chaos and decay in which it was enveloped, and what would have seemed an impossible task to one of less persistent nature had not daunted his courage.

Abiah had worked early and late with untiring energy, and his wife, who was his equal in industry and frugality, had aided him greatly in his struggle.

In course of time success had crowned his labors and he had found himself the owner of a prosperous farm, which was clear of debt and returned him a large revenue. Sons and daughters had been born to him, only two of whom, however, Alice and Barton, the two youngest, have to do with this narrative.

Barton Cathcart was a true son of his father. Industry and fidelity marked him from his childhood, and he early manifested an ambition and tenacity of purpose which were remarkable in one so young. At the age of ten he was ambitious to do a man's work, and in any labor that required tact and quickness, rather than strength, he was fully the equal of a grown person.

He was eager to prove himself strong and hardy, rejoicing in the severest storms, and aspiring to the reputation of being considered "a good farmer." His winters were given to schooling, and his father's example bred in him a love of read-

ing. When he was fourteen years of age dim questionings began to arise in his mind as to how he should spend his future life, and while a choice of various careers floated before him, the die was cast by Rose Wentworth, his childhood's friend and companion.

Rose was the doctor's daughter, lovely in form and feature as well as in character, and loved by all who knew her. She was just the age of Barton's sister Alice, and the two girls had grown up together and were devoted friends.

When discussing the vital question of a career, Rose expressed the opinion that to her mind college was the first stepping-stone toward a useful life, and Barton, who had not thought of this matter before, was impressed at once with the suggestion.

From this time his mind was filled with the ambition to go to college, and he confided his hope to his parents, who looked upon it as a great step, which should not be taken lightly or unadvisedly.

His father told Barton that if he proved himself worthy of this higher education he would willingly indulge him in his desire, but that he must first perfect himself in some branch of learning which his parent should choose.

Accordingly, surveying was decided upon by Mr. Cathcart, and Barton agreed to acquire as much knowledge as he could on that subject. He betook himself to "Uncle Tommy Taft," who was a retired sailor, and who, he felt sure, could give him advice on this subject. Uncle Tommy was a good-natured old soul, beloved by all the children in the village, for in spite of his rough manners and outlandish ways, he had a warm heart, which they did not fail to appreciate.

Tommy had a wooden leg which he addressed with the endearing epithet of "old Smasher," and the cheery old fellow, who tinkered and did odd jobs for a living, was always full of quips and pranks and stories of adventure drawn from his seafaring experiences.

The jolly old soul had a wink and a word for everybody, and his kind services rendered to the children, and to those poorer than himself, always without compensation, were too numerous to relate.

Good Parson Buell sometimes visited his shop in the regular rounds of parochial duty and tried to talk faithfully to him.

Tommy would listen respectfully and then would respond in the following manner:

"I know that I am, Parson, a sinner—an awful sinner; and without excuse. I live below my privileges; I don't live up to my light and knowledge. To set under such preachin' as I do, Parson Buell, and not to be better'n I am, is a great sin; and I'm afeerd that I get harder and harder, and that I am puttin' off the day of repentance, and sinnin' away my opportunities, and wastin' my day of grace. It is a surprisin' thing in me! I don't wonder that you are alarmed at my case, Parson. It is a very alarmin' case—I know it is. It has been alarmin' for more'n forty years. I ought to repent, that's sartain! Why shouldn't I? It is well said that it is time for sinners to be surprised in Zion. The rest of the varse, too, is very alarmin'. 'Who among us shall dwell with devourin' fire, and who among us shall dwell with everlastin' burnings?' It is sartinly time that I should repent of my evil thoughts, and my drinkin', and of my swearin', and of my manifold evil ways and deeds, and I hope, Parson, you will pray for me."

Among Tommy's friends no one ranked higher than Barton, and for him the old man had a feeling akin to worship, so that when the latter came to him to confide his college ambitions he could not disguise the regret awakened by the thought of the boy's departure. His manner was so new, and there was such a sort of helplessness in his way, that Barton was affected by it, and said:

"Why, Tommy, I sha'n't go this two years, and I shall be home every vacation, you know. It is only a few miles to Amherst, anyhow."

"It's all right. If a boy's got anything particular in him, it'll certainly git out, somehow, and it ain't much use to try to stop it. If you do, it'll only twist it and twirl it, like a seed with a board on it, that will come up and creep out sideways, and gits up in spite of hindrance, only with a cruel crooked stem. I might 'a made a smart man once, but they meddled with me, and I was fierce—well, no matter. Old Tommy missed it. But you won't. You'll be all right, Barton, boy!

On the hull, I'm glad of it. Folks that stay to hum are like coasters—sloops and schooners like, that run along shore and do a peddlin' business in shoal water. Folks that go to college are square-rigged. They can make long voyages, carry big freights, go around the world if they're mind to."

In course of time Barton was ready to enter college. He had finished his preparatory studies in a satisfactory manner, and his scholastic ability combined with his athletic prowess made him the pride of the village.

During the last months at home the strong feeling of affection which Barton had always entertained for Rose had been steadily increasing, and he at last realized that he felt for her a passionate and overwhelming love.

Feeling himself unworthy of her, he kept back the words he fain would have uttered during their last evening together, but confided his secret to his mother, who urged him to wait a little longer before acquainting Rose with his feelings.

During Barton's years at college Rose saw him only at infrequent intervals, and on these occasions Barton's efforts to conceal his true feelings caused him to appear formal and cold.

Rose found other admirers who were not held back by scruples of any sort, and Frank Esel, a handsome young artist, and Tom Heywood, a dashing and fascinating Southerner, both aspired to her hand. But Rose did not reciprocate the affection of either of these suitors, as she realized that lying dormant in her heart was a deep love for Barton, waiting to be acknowledged when he should ask for it.

Barton was graduated from college with highest honors, and returned to his native town, where he accepted the place offered him by the trustees to become principal of the Norwood Academy.

This engagement was gratifying to him in every respect, as he was glad to spend a few years in teaching before deciding on his life-work, and also it would keep him near Rose. He found, however, to his consternation, that he had apparently a dangerous rival in Tom Heywood, and he seriously considered questioning him in regard to his intentions.

During this period of uncertainty Barton kept away from Rose, thereby causing her to wonder at his indifference. He

finally decided to go West on a business venture, and leave the field to Heywood for a time, thinking that this method of procedure would bring matters to a crisis.

Accordingly, he slipped away without even bidding good-by to Rose, who, though she was at a loss to understand his behavior, did not waver in her allegiance to him.

Meanwhile Alice Cathcart had found her heart going out to the handsome young Southerner, though she fully understood that his interest was centered in Rose.

One day, while the young people were on a nutting excursion, Heywood slipped through a crevasse and was picked up unconscious and with a broken leg. He was carried to the Cathcart farm, where he was nursed through his illness and convalescence by Mrs. Cathcart and Alice, the latter finding her happiest hours when seated by his bedside.

Heywood, on his part, began to appreciate the attractions of his shy, brown-eyed companion, but before he was aware of any serious feelings rumors of war called him back to the South.

The echo of the guns that fired on Fort Sumter was heard in the quiet town of Norwood, and the loyal citizens of that place immediately organized their militia and set out on the march to the front.

Barton, who had returned from the West a few weeks previously, was put in command of a company and departed at the first call. He had reached Norwood in time to cheer with his presence the death-bed of Tommy Taft, which old friend had felt that he could not die content without seeing his much-loved Barton once again.

Before departing for the seat of war, Barton wrote a letter to Rose, who was absent on a visit, telling her of the deep feeling he cherished for her in these words:

"To-day I leave for the field upon a sudden summons. My whole soul consents. I was never more cheerful. But a single shadow lies upon me. At last let me speak plainly, Rose. I am sad at leaving you, whom I love more than father and mother, or all besides. This will surprise you, but it is no sudden experience. It has been the secret of my life.

"Only within the year have I been in circumstances to justify me in an honorable solicitation. But a shadow fell upon me. Another came before me. Pardon me! I would not speak of it, but I may never return, and for our childhood friendship's sake you will indulge me in the sad pleasure at last of speaking out my heart.

"If only I knew that your interest was with another, all struggle would cease. Your happiness would shed some faint joy on my disappointment. I know not whether, even if you were free, you could love me. Have I said too much? It is as nothing to the unsaid. The silence of my heart through years now yearns for an expression. Only let me hear one word from you; if not in Boston, then at Washington. I pray you do not send me to the war without a word to say that you are not offended—to say more would be a joy too great to hope! But let me not go in the chill of utter silence.

"BARTON."

This letter he hastily folded, and, being obliged to trust it to a messenger, put it into the hands of black Pete, whom he charged to deliver it safely.

"Sawmill Pete," as this individual was usually called, was a well-known character in Norwood. He was colossal in size and strength, overflowing with good nature, and spent his time doing odd jobs instead of devoting himself to any regular labor. He had been the friend of Barton and Rose from their earliest days, and as children they never were happier than when learning about the trees and flowers from Sawmill Pete.

One weakness Pete had which is common to many, and that was his fondness for liquor, but fortunately it assailed him only at infrequent intervals, and at other times he was thoroughly trustworthy and reliable.

On the night that Pete took Barton's letter he found himself surrounded by many temptations, numerous treats were offered him by men who were to set out for the scene of war the following day, and he could not fail to respond to their advances.

By the time that evening had waned Pete's brain had become somewhat hazy, but he did not forget Barton's commission, and delivered to Dr. Wentworth a note which he thought the correct one.

But this note was only a business communication intended for Barton's father, which the doctor promptly forwarded to its rightful owner. The note addressed to Rose never reached its destination, but was accidentally tossed by Pete into the fire with some other crumpled papers, when he was clearing out his pockets the following morning.

Rose returned from her visit just after Barton and his men had taken their hurried departure, and found it impossible to conjecture any reason why he should leave her a second time

without a word of farewell; she tried, however, to console herself with the thought that there must have been some good reason for his having done so.

While the men of Norwood were giving their lives and their services to their country, the faithful women at home were doing everything in their power to assist in the great struggle.

Rose worked for the soldiers unceasingly, but was not satisfied with these slight tasks, for she longed to go to the front as a nurse, and begged her father to accede to her wish.

The death of her brother Arthur, on the battle-field, awakened the conviction in her mind that in this course lay her duty; and her father, feeling at last that she was called to this noble mission, gave his consent. Accordingly, after some months spent in preparation and study, Rose set out for Washington accompanied by Agate Bissell, who had been the Wentworths' faithful housekeeper and friend for many years.

Alice Cathcart also was filled with a burning desire to aid in this work, and after gaining her parents' consent she joined Rose in this labor of love. The two girls were never separated; they worked together, traveled together, slept together, and were equally admired and beloved by the soldiers to whom they ministered.

Alice Cathcart was not less patriotic in her feelings than Rose, but for some reason she added to these generous impulses a peculiar pity and tenderness toward the sick and wounded rebel prisoners.

Her thoughts continually turned to Heywood, who was fighting for the Confederacy, in spite of the fact that his heart was not in the cause, for his judgment and reason told him that the Northerners were right in this great conflict.

After several months of service in the Washington hospitals, Rose and Alice returned to their homes for a period of rest; but before this time had elapsed they were impatient to be back at their labors, and returned to their work in time to enter the campaign of Chancellorsville.

This campaign opened in May, 1863, and Barton Cathcart (who had been advanced to the rank of general), learning of his sister's presence, immediately sought her out and had an affectionate meeting with her, but missed seeing Rose Wentworth,

who was at that time temporarily employed in the transport service. But just before the great battle of Gettysburg these two lovers, between whom existed such a complete misunderstanding, had a sudden and unexpected meeting. It was only for a passing moment, and but few words were exchanged between them, yet as they stood together Barton fixed upon Rose a look so full of inquiry, so imploring and hungry, so full of eagerness and helplessness, that Rose never forgot it.

During the terrible scenes that followed Rose and Alice worked tirelessly, and when after days and nights of almost continual service Rose was questioned as to how she could endure so much and hold out so long, she responded, "God gave me strength according to my need."

During one terrible charge, in which the Union troops were led by Barton, Alice recognized Tom Heywood in the opposing army, and her grief and fear lest he should be killed knew no bounds. The following morning Alice was up before dawn, searching with anxious foreboding for some news of Heywood. To her horror, she suddenly came upon his dead body, and the shock was so great that she was bewildered, and could not believe as she gazed upon his noble face that its calmness was more than that of sleep.

"Speak to me!" she cried. "Do wake! It is Alice—Alice Cathcart! O Heywood, I would speak to you if it were I lying so! He is not dead! It cannot be death!"

Then, looking long and wildly, as a child looks shudderingly into some dark room at night, she lowered her voice and said in a hoarse whisper:

"He is dead! O God, take me!"

Already the light seemed vanishing and Alice fell fainting upon Heywood's breast. At last she had found on his bosom a brief rest of love.

Thus she was found by Hiram Beers, an old Norwood friend, who lifted her up tenderly and gave her what comfort he could.

Alice returned to the hospital, arranged her apparel with more than common care, and stepped forth calmly but firmly to her merciful duties. Her face was serene but without smiles. Her care and pity, always striking, had in them now

an austere tenderness that struck the rudest men with awe and admiration, as if an inspired priestess were among them. Nor, to the end, did Alice ever mention Heywood's name, nor for one waking hour did she ever forget it!

After the third day of Gettysburg, which brought victory to the Northern troops, Rose received a letter from Barton which was brought to her by Hiram Beers, with the sad tidings that General Cathcart had fallen in the battle and that no trace of him could be found.

Rose took the letter and read:

"I have a presentiment, Rose, I feel that evil will befall me to-morrow. If you get these lines I shall have fallen, and my words will be forgiven as of one dead. Rose, I have tried to conquer that love which has so taken possession of my life as to overcome all other feelings. As early as I can remember, I loved you. It has grown with my manhood. It is a part of my being. Not to love you would be not to be myself. When I told you all this, on leaving home, I had hoped for some sympathy; I pleaded for only a word. My letter was not answered or noticed. Perhaps your silence was best. It was hard to bear. If I could have ceased loving, I could have conquered the pain of the refusal which you gave by silence. It will not be a trouble to you any longer to know that a heart has loved you beyond every other thing. My latest, strongest feeling, Rose, is love for you! My last wishes and prayers invoke blessings on you! I go toward darkness; but there is a light beyond. In heaven, O Rose, in heaven, I shall meet you, and say 'I love you!' without fear of repulse.

"BARTON CATHCART."

Rose stood silent and motionless. Amazement, sorrow, and joy filled her heart. She whispered to herself:

"He loved me! He loved me always!—best!—to the last! He told me of it! When? what letter? There has been some dreadful mistake! And he will never know that I loved him more! Noble soul, if thou art in heaven, God will tell thee how thou art loved!—And he wrote to me! wrote to tell me all this when first leaving Norwood? Where is that treacherous letter that did not fulfil its message?"

Rose then called Alice and broke the sad news to her; but while she did so her mood seemed exalted, as in her sorrow she was filled with an overmastering joy, and she could triumph in the knowledge of Barton's undying love.

Alice saw in Rose's experience a great contrast to the one that had come to her, as her one desire had been for Heywood's love, and that longing must forever remain ungratified.

After three days, during which time Barton was mourned

as dead, news came that he had been picked up wounded on the battle-field and taken prisoner.

Rose was overwhelmed with joy at the tidings that he still lived, and wished to go immediately to get a pass that would take her through the enemy's lines so that she might see General Lee and sue for Barton's release.

Just as she was departing, however, Sawmill Pete, who had been Barton's faithful servant and ally through the war, appeared on the scene with the further information that Barton was among friends, but was seriously wounded and lying very near death.

Rose, accompanied by her father, who had recently responded to the call for surgeons, set out at once, guided by Pete, for Barton's bedside. They found him in the home of a kind family named Hetherington, where he had been carried by the faithful Pete, who had journeyed for miles with Barton in his arms after rescuing him from the hands of the enemy.

Barton hovered for some days between life and death, but at last consciousness returned, and he opened his eyes and saw Rose kneeling beside him.

He put his hand timidly out to touch her, as if to make sure whether it was an illusion or a reality. His hand was clasped in both of hers. She leaned toward him. He felt her kiss upon his brow. Slowly and with difficulty he spoke:

"Is—this—Rose?—my Rose?—I mean—"

"Yes, Barton—your own Rose; you will live, Barton—O Barton, live! live!" She spoke with an intensity full of anguish, for a moment letting go restraint.

He lay silent. His eyes were closed. In his weakness he could not keep back the tears that would break from under his eyelids. After a moment's pause, Barton raised his eyes to Rose with a look of utter imploring, as if he would say: "Do not let me be deceived, nor send me back again to hopelessness."

Her eyes were full of gladness and love, if one could have seen them behind her tears.

"God has been very gracious to us both, Barton. He has brought us together, and nothing shall ever divide us again."

After Barton's wounds were healed and his strength had returned, he joined his corps again and fought with them till

the war ended, two years later. Then, his duties over, he returned to Norwood and married his beloved and faithful Rose, who had proved herself worthy to be the wife of a man so noble.

The village of Norwood rejoiced in this happy event and united with enthusiasm in the wedding festivities of these two lovers, who had so truly merited the love and admiration of their community.

APHRA BEHN

(England, 1640–1689)

OROONOKO: OR, THE ROYAL SLAVE (1658)

Among the many productions of the prolific pen of Mrs. Behn, this tale occupies a unique place. Most of her other works were exceedingly imaginative poems, or else novels and plays of a very light and somewhat coarse character, intended to amuse the fops and rakes of the court of Charles II. But in the tragic narrative of *The Royal Slave* she allowed the emotions of a warm and sympathetic heart to pour themselves out freely in an endeavor to arouse public indignation against the unspeakable barbarities endured by the bondmen of British Colonies, chronicling in all its horrors, as she does, the dreadful sufferings of one of its most notable victims. In tracing the pedigree of modern "novels with a purpose," such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *Ramona*, the moving tale of *Oroonoko* must be counted as among the earliest of the kind. Its evident purpose to awaken the Christian people of England to the horrors of slavery in lands under their own government, and the author's warm and womanly sympathy with the despised black men, well justifies the compliment that has been paid *Oroonoko* of being "the first humanitarian novel in English." Moreover, in an epoch when purely imaginative romance was the fashion of the day, Mrs. Behn in *Oroonoko* made a noticeable departure toward the field of realism. She assured her readers over and over that this pathetic story of the Royal Slave is no invention of fancy but a narrative of facts. To a great part of these events she was an eye-witness. For the rest, she had the authority of direct accounts received either from the Royal Slave himself or from her own personal friends. She had herself seen and talked with Oroonoko and Imoinda, and learned to admire and esteem them and often sought to befriend them. The most horrible atrocities of all, the brutalities attending Oroonoko's execution, had been witnessed by her mother and sister, who had in vain tried to save him. On her return to London she put into literary form the accounts of the African hero which she had collected in Surinam.

OROMANTIEN was a part of Africa which in the seventeenth century was one of the chief resorts of the slave-traders. Its king was a man more than a hundred years old. Thirteen of his sons had died in battle, and he had left for a successor one grandchild, called Oroonoko. This boy was sent into the field to be trained to war as soon as he could bear a bow, and at seventeen he became one of the bravest and most expert of captains.

When he came back from war victorious, and presented him-

self at court, he became the object of universal admiration. The cleverest sculptor could not form the figure of a man more admirably turned from head to foot. His face was a perfect ebony, his nose was Roman, and his eyes were the most awe-inspiring that could be seen and very piercing; the white of them being like snow; as were his teeth. Nor did the perfections of his mind come short of his person, for his discourse was admirable upon almost every subject. He spoke English and French with ease. Whoever had heard him speak would have been convinced of their errors that all fine wit is confined to white men, and would have confessed that Oroonoko was as capable of governing wisely, had as great a soul and conceived as statesman-like maxims as any prince civilized in the most refined schools of humanity or the most illustrious courts.

The old General, who had trained Oroonoko in war, had left at his death an only daughter, Imoinda, a beauty who was the lovely black Venus to this young Mars, as charming in person as he, and of delicate virtues. When Oronooko made his first visit to her, he was infinitely surprised at the beauty of this charming Queen of Night. The lovely modesty with which she received him, the softness in her look and sighs gained a perfect conquest over his fierce heart. Having made his first compliments, and presented her with a hundred and fifty slaves in fetters, he told her with his eyes that he was not insensible of her charms. Imoinda was pleased to believe that she understood that silent language of new-born love.

Oroonoko stayed not long before he made a second visit; and waited not much longer before he frankly told her he adored her. As he knew no vice, his flame aimed at nothing but honor. Though in that country men take to themselves as many wives as they can maintain, Oroonoko made to Imoinda his vows that she should be the only woman he would possess: that no age nor wrinkles should incline him to change; for her soul would be always fine and young to him. After listening to a thousand assurances of his lasting flame and her eternal empire over him, she condescended to receive him as her husband.

Unfortunately, it was necessary to obtain the consent of the old King, the Prince's grandfather. But at the report of Imo-

inda's surpassing beauty the monarch's aged heart felt new sparks of love and began to kindle.

And when the King, himself unseen, beheld her charming face, he saw and burned, and would not delay his happiness. No sooner had he returned to his palace than he sent to Imoinda the royal veil, a sign in that country that "the maid who receives it is for the King's use and 'tis death to disobey."

The lovely maiden, at this news, was seized with grief, but, almost fainting, she was covered with the veil and led to court. The King sat under a canopy in state, in a very rich bath, to receive this longed-for virgin. Without more courtship, the old monarch bade her throw off her mantle and come to his arms. But Imoinda, all in tears, threw herself on the marble brink of the bath, and tremblingly told him she was already another's, through the interchange of the most solemn vows. But as she assured him also, for fear of his vengeance upon Oroonoko, that she was still a maid, the King put her among his other wives in his Otan or seraglio. Although forced at last to yield her lovely person to the withered arms of the impotent old King, she could only sigh and weep there, and think of Oroonoko, and oftentimes could not forbear speaking of him.

Through the reports of his officers, and the dissemblance of Oroonoko, the King became convinced after a time that the Prince, his grandson, was no longer a lover of Imoinda. So he took him in his train to the Otan, to banquet with his wives. But when Oroonoko's eyes, instructed by his passionate heart, exchanged glances with Imoinda's love-darting orbs, they spoke so affectionately that she no longer doubted that she was the only delight and darling of his soul.

The parley of the eyes of these two lovers had not passed so secretly that an old and jealous sovereign could not detect it.

At the entertainment that night, the royal ladies danced for the diversion of the King. But while Imoinda was beholding with infinite pleasure the joy her motions and graces produced in the eyes of the Prince, regarding him too much, rather than the steps she took, she chanced to fall, and the Prince, leaping up from the carpet where he reclined, clasped her close to his bosom and quite forgot the reverence that was due to the mis-

tress of a king. The monarch, in a jealous rage, led Imoinda to her apartment and ordered Oroonoko to go to the camp.

But the Prince felt that he could not depart till he had seen his beloved once more. By the clever management of his friend Aboan, assisted by a former mistress of the old King, Onahal by name, Oroonoko was led through the citron-grove to the apartment of Imoinda in the sacred precincts of the Otan. The Prince softly awakened Imoinda, who was surprised with joy, and yet trembled with a thousand fears. Beyond imagination was the satisfaction of the two young lovers thus to meet, and beyond expression were the transports of Oroonoko as he listened to the charming assurances that came from the lips of his beloved that fate had allowed her to keep herself for him and him alone. Amid a thousand caresses, both bemoaned the hard fate of youth and beauty. But while they were thus fondly employed, they heard a great noise in the Otan. Spies had tracked the Prince to the forbidden quarters of the seraglio. Oroonoko seized his battle-ax, rushed to the door, and with a commanding voice called out that he, the Prince Oroonoko, would revenge with death the entrance of any rude intruder. "Stand back and know that this place is sacred to love and me to-night. To-morrow, 'tis the King's!"

Having ascertained the Prince's identity, the King's officers withdrew, and Oroonoko fled. The old King bitterly reproached Imoinda, who, falling in tears at his feet, implored his pardon for a fault which she had not with her will committed. The aged monarch, enraged, ordered Imoinda and her companion, Onahal, to be sold as slaves to some other country, whether Christian or heathen he cared not. This cruel sentence, reckoned in that country as worse than death, was immediately and secretly carried out, in spite of the poor victim's prayers, and no one within or without the seraglio knew their fate.

When the King had thus wreaked his revenge on the women for the insult to himself, his anger toward his grandson cooled. He sent word to Oroonoko by a messenger that Imoinda was dead. For two long days, in the very face of the enemy, Oroonoko lay prostrate in his tent, overwhelmed with grief, declaring that henceforth he would never lift a weapon but would abandon the small remains of his life to sighs and tears.

But when his army was driven back in disorder, he leaped from his couch and cried: "Come, if we must die, let us meet death the noblest way!" That day he performed such prodigies of reckless valor as to change absolutely the fate of the battle.

After a long time spent in military campaigns, the Prince at last, in obedience to his grandfather's wishes, returned to court. There he met for the second time a well-bred sea captain with whom he had often trafficked for slaves. The sea captain entertained the Prince daily with globes and maps, mathematical discourses and instruments, and drank and hunted with him with such familiarity that he quite drew to himself the heart of the gallant young man.

Before the captain set sail he gave to the Prince and his train an invitation to a grand banquet on his vessel. On board ship the noblest youths of the court of Coromantien sat down to a splendid feast, and were so well plied with wines that, when the captain gave to his men the signal agreed upon, Oroonoko and all his retinue were easily shackled fast in heavy irons, and, as the vessel sailed off, they found themselves in slavery.

Oroonoko raged and struggled like a lion taken in toils, but all in vain. And when he found he could not turn a hand against either his foes or himself, he lay down and refused all food, firmly resolved to die. The Prince's followers, also, would touch no food. It seemed as if, through suicide, the captain would lose most of his slaves. In this predicament the captain solemnly promised the Prince, with many oaths and on the word of a Christian, that if he would live and show himself to his followers, he should be freed from his shackles, and with his friends should be set ashore when next the ship touched.

The Prince gave his parole of honor for his good behavior, and, freed from his irons, was conducted to the captain's own cabin. When he had eaten, he visited his people, repeating the assurances of the captain, and the rest of the voyage was borne by all in hope and patience.

But when the ship reached the mouth of the river of Surinam, a colony of England, later known as Dutch Guiana, Oroonoko and his noble attendants learned at once how little trust could be put in any slave-trader's oaths. For they found themselves seized and sold as slaves to the various merchants and over-

seers who had come down to meet the slave-ship. It was in vain to make any resistance to this base treachery. But with such disdainful looks did Oroonoko upbraid the slave-captain that blushes rose to his guilty cheeks; and as the Prince passed over the side of the ship he cried: "Farewell, sir! 'Tis worth my sufferings to gain so true a knowledge both of you and of your gods by whom you swear. Come, my fellow-slaves; let us descend, and see if we can meet with more honor and honesty in the next world which we shall touch upon."

When at length Oroonoko had made the journey up the great river to his master's plantation, and had been conducted to the quarters assigned him among the negroes' cabins, the slaves, as soon as they beheld him, recognized him as the Prince who had at various times sold most of them to the traders, and, in accordance with the veneration which they pay to their great men, they all cast themselves at his feet, crying out in their language, "Long live, O King!" and kissing his feet, paid him even divine homage. But the Prince, troubled with their joy, bade them rise and receive him as their fellow-slave.

At a grand supper which his fellow-negroes soon afterward held in his honor, Oroonoko, in the course of conversation, heard the most glowing accounts of a most charming black woman who had recently come to this neighborhood. Clemene, as she was called, had all the slaves perpetually at her feet, and no man of any nation or color ever beheld her face that did not fall in love with her. Clemene herself was, however, all ice and unconcern, and her graceful modesty, the most exquisite that ever beautified youth, seemed to fear that even the breezes might steal kisses from her delicate mouth.

The next day, Oroonoko, in the company of his master, met the much-praised Clemene. Her eyes, shyly bent on the ground, gave the Prince the opportunity to take a good look at her face. In a minute he recognized in her his beloved Imoinda. As she fell insensible, overcome with delight, the Prince caught her in his arms; and it is needless to tell with what ecstasies of joy they beheld each other, without speaking; then snatched each other to their arms; then gazed again, as if they still doubted whether they possessed the blessing they grasped, and wondered with tender greetings what strange

destiny had brought them together. Although they bewailed their fate, at the same time they mutually protested that even fetters and slavery would be supported with joy while they could be so happy as to possess each other.

From that happy day, Cesar, as his English master had dubbed Oroonoko, took Imoinda for his wife. At the wedding there was as much magnificence as the country and their condition would allow, and it was not long before Cesar, as henceforth he was called, adored her still more, because of her approaching motherhood. This new accident made him more impatient for liberty; and every day he made an offer of gold or slaves as the price of his freedom.

From day to day he was fed with promise after promise and put off, till the new Governor of Surinam should come. At length he began to fear that the delay was a piece of treachery, and that the matter was purposely postponed until the birth of the child, who would also be a slave. This thought made him uneasy and sullen. To distract his attention, Cesar was diverted with sports, hunting and fishing, and with trips among the Indian tribes, in the course of which he performed most notable feats in the killing of fierce tigers and monstrous snakes. Yet these were not actions great enough for his large soul, which still panted for more renowned actions.

The fear and grief of Imoinda that she and her child might be kept as slaves were like so many darts in the great heart of Cesar. So one Sunday, when all the whites were overcome with liquor, Cesar met about three hundred of his fellow blacks and made an impassioned harangue to them about the ignominies and drudgeries of the state of slavery; sufferings fitter for senseless brutes than for human souls. "An ass or a dog," he said, "having done his duty, could lie down in retreat, and while he did his duty endured no stripes. But men, such as they, toiled through all the tedious week till Black Friday; and then, whether they were faulty or meritorious, they promiscuously suffered the infamous lash till blood trickled from all parts of their body. We are bought and sold like apes and monkeys, to be the support of rogues and renegades who have abandoned their own countries for rapine, murders, theft, and villanies. Will you suffer the lash from such hands?"

His hearers replied with one accord: "No! No! Cesar has spoken like a great captain, like a great king."

It was resolved by the company to take their wives and children with them and travel to the sea-shore, and when they could seize a ship, employ it to transport them to their native land. Even if they died in the attempt, it would be braver than to live in perpetual slavery. With one accord they vowed to follow Cesar even to death; and that very night they furnished themselves with arms, and began the march.

The militia of the colony turned out to pursue the rebellious slaves. But many of the better sort sympathized with Cesar, as a man who had been ill-used; and the white men who engaged in the pursuit were armed only with whips, clubs, or rusty old-fashioned swords and guns of little use. In the battle that followed, Cesar and some of his followers fought most valorously. Imoinda shot the Governor in the shoulder with a poisoned arrow—a wound so severe that he barely escaped with his life. But most of the blacks proved a cowardly lot, by nature slaves and fit only for white men's tools. The women and children lost all sense in their great fear, and, rushing among their own fighters, hung upon them and implored them to yield. At length a parley was begun, in which Byam, the Governor, made the fairest promises that if Cesar would surrender he and and his family should depart free out of the land. Cesar at first refused, declaring that there was no faith in the white men or the gods they adored.

"Though no people profess so much as the Christians," he said, "none perform so little. When I deal with men of honor I know what I have to do, but with the whites a man ought to be continually on his guard."

But the solicitations of his followers and friends were so great, and the Governor spoke him so fairly and made such solemn oaths of good treatment, that at length Cesar yielded, taking the precaution, however, to have the agreement ratified by the Governor's hand in writing. All this was agreed to.

Nevertheless, as soon as Cesar and his chief man-at-arms reached the slave quarters, they were treacherously surprised, bound to stakes, and whipped in the most inhuman manner, so as even to rend the very flesh from the bones. Then, to

complete their cruelty, his many wounds were rubbed with Indian pepper, which had like to have made him raving mad.

But worse to him even than the pain was the disgrace he felt that he, a prince, should thus have been whipped. Thenceforth, his one thought was to be revenged on the Governor who had perfidiously inflicted such infamy on him. Hearing of these threats, the Council condemned Cesar to be hanged. But Cesar's friend Trefry, on whose plantation Cesar was, denied the Council's jurisdiction. Cesar's days meanwhile passed in black designs and melancholy thoughts. He must, he felt, have revenge on the Governor for his unspeakable indignities and treacherous cruelties. But his great heart could not endure the thought of leaving his lovely Imoinda as a prey to the enraged multitude, exposed to their vile lusts and probably to a shameful death. So one sad day he took Imoinda into a wood, to which in happier days they used to go, and there he opened to her his tragic plan; first to kill her, then to kill his enemies, and next himself. He found the heroic wife readier to plead for death as the only way of escape than he to propose it, and she besought him not to leave her a prey to his enemies.

Embracing her with all the passion of a dying lover, he drew his knife to kill this treasure of his soul. Tears trickled down his cheeks; but she smiled with joy that she should die by so noble a hand.

When the eternal leave-taking of the lovers was ended, the lovely victim laid herself down before the sacrificer, while he, with a hand resolved and a heart breaking within, gave the fatal stroke. As soon as he had done the deed, he laid the body decently on leaves and flowers of which he made a bed, concealing it under a similar coverlid of Nature's handiwork.

But when he found she was dead, past retrieval, his grief became a raging madness.

A thousand times he turned the fatal knife toward his own heart, with a resolution to follow her at once in death. But the desire of revenge on his foes, now a thousand times more intense, prevented him. Then, when he thought how, with his own hand, he had sacrificed the fairest and dearest creature that ever Nature made, grief got the ascendancy. He lay down by her side and watered her face with showers of tears. How-

ever bent he was on his intended slaughter of his enemies, he had not power to stir from the sight of his dear love, now more adored than ever. In this terrible state, vacillating between fits of intense remorse, revenge, and despondence, he remained for two days; his eyes and brain dizzy, and all his limbs overcome with a faintness never felt before. Then a party of white pursuers found him and learned the dreadful deed he had committed. While they were hesitating which should venture to attack him, Cesar ripped up his own bowels, lest he be taken alive and again fall a victim to the shameful whip. Nevertheless, he was soon surrounded, and in his weak and mangled condition was caught and carried to his master's plantation, where a surgeon dressed his wounds and he was given food and cordials, and recovered sufficiently to explain the motives that led him to sacrifice his wife. But while his friends among the whites were away, the Governor and one of his council (resolved to compass the death of the rebellious slave-leader) seized him, tied him to the whipping-post, had a great fire made before him, and told Cesar he should die like a dog.

Cesar in reply assured his executioner that if "he would keep that word, he was the only man of all the whites that ever he heard speak truth." To those who threatened him with immediate execution, Oroonoko replied, smiling, "A blessing on thee!" and assured them that they need not tie him, for he would stand fixed like a rock and endure death, so as to encourage them to die.

Then the executioners, with revolting atrocity, cut off the living flesh and members, piece by piece, and tossed them into the fire, till, without a groan, Oroonoko gave up the ghost. Not even then were the savage slave-owners content, but barbarously cut the dead body into quarters and sent it round to the various plantations in the neighborhood.

"Thus died this great man, worthy of a better fate," a man whose glorious name should "survive to all ages with that of the brave, the beautiful, and the constant Imoinda."